Imam Abu Hamed AL-GHAZALI
(450-505 H.=1058-1111 A.D.)
REVIVAL OF
RELIGION'S SCIENCES
IHYA' ULUM AD-DIN
إحياء علوم الدين
Translated by
Mohammad Mahdi al-Sharif
Volume IV
The quarter of the saviors
منشورات
محمد علي بيضون
دار الكتب العلمية
DKI
Beirut- Lebanon

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CONTENTS

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL
REVIVAL OF RELIGIOUS SCIENCES
QUARTER OF SAVIORS
THE FOURTH QUARTER OF REVIVAL OF RELIGIOUS SCIENCES

Book one: Repentance

It is the first book of the quarter of saviors

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah with whose praise every book is prefaced; with Whose invocation every discourse is commenced; by whose praise the people of felicity shall abide with ease in the abode of recompense; and by Whose Name the wretched are consoled, even if the bar is set down before them, and they are separated from the bliss by a portal wall, inside which there is Divine Mercy, while outside there is Divine Chastisement.

We turn unto Him in repentance, are convinced that He is master of all masters and originator of all causes. We look to Him in anticipation, are certain of His being the King, compassionate, forgiving and ready to accept repentance. We blend dread with hope, and have no doubt that while forgiving of transgression and receptive to repentance He is stern in inflicting punishment.

We pray for His prophet Muhammad "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and for his family and companions, a prayer that will rescue us from the terror of the place whence one will look down on the day of resurrection and will secure for us nearness to and safe refuge with Allah.

Coming to the point: Repentance from sin, by recourse to the Concealer of defects and Knower of secrets is the starting point for the followers of the spiritual path, the capital of the successful, the first step of the aspirants, key to the straightening of the bent, the prelude of the selection and election for those who are brought close to Allah, and for our father Adam "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and all the other prophets. How appropriate it is for children to emulate their fathers and ancestors. There is no wonder if a son of Adam sins and does wrong, a disposition recognizable as a hereditary trait, For whoever resembles his father (even in sin) is not wrongful. However, if the father is restored after failing and is revitalized after aging, let the emulation of him be at both poles, of the negative and the positive. Adam has been smitten with remorse, filled with repentance over his past deeds. Anyone who follows him as a model of sinning (only), and not in repentance, has stumbled.

Devotion to pure goodness is a trait of the angels close to Allah. Devotion to uncorrected evil is the nature of devils. But, return to good after stumbling in evil is inevitable in human beings. The devotee of absolute good is an angel intimate of the King (who is) Judge. The devotee of evil only is a devil. But he who rectifies evil by returning to good, is, indeed, a human being. So, in man's nature

there is a duality of disposition, two traits joining in him.

Every human being verifies his relationship with the Angel, Adam or the Devil. The repentant, by keeping to the definition of Man, truly proves that he is related to Adam, whilst he who persists in iniquity proves that he is related to the Devil. Confirmation of relationship to the Angels, however, by dedication exclusively to the good, is beyond the realm of possibility. For evil is firmly kneaded with good in the nature of man, and it cannot be refined except by one of the two fires: fire of repentance, or fire of Hell. Burning in fire is necessary to purify the human essence from the Satanic pollution. It is up to you now to choose the easier fire, and to be prompt in embarking on the lesser discomfort before the choice is withdrawn to give way to the inevitability of either Paradise or Hell.

Since repentance occupies such a place in religion, it must be put first in the Quarter of saviors with explanation of its true nature, requisites, motivation, manifestation and benefit, the difficulties barring it and the remedies facilitating it. This will become clear by discussing four pillars.

The first pillar: on the nature of repentance:

Explication of its definition and true character; that it is obligatory, at once, on all men, under all conditions and that, if properly carried through, is accepted.

The second pillar: On the context of repentance (injustice):

Explication of sin's, their division into trivial and major sins, some toward one's fellow man others toward Allah; how higher and lower states (in the hereafter) are distributed according to good and evil deeds (in this life); the circumstances that turn the trivial into major sins.

The third pillar: On the requisites and perseverance of repentance. How past iniquities may be corrected, and sins atoned; the categories of men according to their perseverance in repentance.

The fourth pillar: On the stimulus of repentance and the way of treatment for the dissolution of the knot of persistence.

The goal of exposition will be attained through these four pillars by Allah's will.

FIRST PILLAR

ON NATURE OF REPENTANCE; EXPLICATION OF REPENTANCE AND ITS DEFINITION

It should be known to you that repentance is a concept that consists of three successive and joined elements: Knowledge, state (of regret) and action. Knowledge is first, state second and action third. The first necessitates the second, and the second necessitates the third, in accordance with the continuity of the divine way in kingdom of visibles and dominion of invisibles.

As for knowledge, it is the realization of the magnitude of the harm caused by sins and its being a barrier between man and the Beloved. If he realizes this with utter and decisive certainty, overwhelming his heart, this realization will stir heartache on account of losing the Beloved. For whenever the heart perceives the withdrawal of the Beloved, it is pained. If the withdrawal is through man's own action, he is regretful of that alienating behaviour. Such grief of the heart over

behaviour alienating the Beloved is called Regret.

When this anguish becomes overpowering, another inner state is induced, termed volition and aspiration towards (new) behaviour connected with the present, the past, and the future. Its connection with the present consists of the repudiation of the sin with which he was entwined. For the future, it involves the determination to abandon forever the sin which causes alienation from the Beloved. With regard to the past, it involves correction of what was omitted by (doing) good and performing (the omitted act), if it is susceptible to be corrected and compensated.

Thus, knowledge is prerequisite and is the starting point of these blessings. By this knowledge, I mean faith, and certitude. To have faith is to accept as true the fact that Sins are a deadly poison. Certitude is to confirm the acceptance of this truth, and to remove all doubt about it leading to its mastery over the heart, so that whenever the illumination of this Faith shines upon the heart it produces the fire of Regret. It, in turn, will bring forth anguish as the heart perceives, through this illumination of the light of the faith, that it has become veiled from its Beloved. As one who was in darkness and on the verge of ruin, and, with the dispersal of clouds and the rending of a veil, the illumination of the sun shone and radiated upon him, and he saw his Beloved. Then the flames of love burn in his heart and these flames flare up in his will to rise to correct his ways.

Knowledge, Regret and intent connected with abandonment (of sin) in the present and future, and correction of the (sin perpetrated in the) past are three successive concepts within this process. Repentance *(Tawbah)* consists of them all. But repentance, more often, is used for the concept of Regret alone, as if making knowledge a precondition, and abandonment a result and later consequence. It is in this sense that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Regret is Repentance." (Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban and Al-Hakim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud; and Ibn Hibban and Al-Hakim on the authority of Anas). That is because Regret is hardly void of knowledge which necessitates and evokes it, and of determination which follows it. Regret is surrounded by both ends, i.e. its result and its cause.

In this sense, it is said about Repentance that it is the melting of the entrails as a result of previous offense for this exposes to sheer agony. It is therefore said: "It is a fire raging in the heart, a fissure within the liver that does not recover." With respect to the meaning of Abandonment as an element of Repentance, it is said: "It is to take off the garment of alienation and put on the garment of fidelity." Sahl Ibn 'Abdullah At-Tastari said: "Repentance is the change from reprehensible acts to commendable acts. This can be accomplished only in solitude and silence, and eating from what is lawful." He seems to have pointed to the third element of Repentance.

The sayings about Repentance are innumerable. Yet, if you have understood these three aspects in their junction and sequence, you will know that all that has been said regarding it falls short of encompassing all its aspects. The search for the knowledge of the true essence is more important than the pursuit of mere verbalizations.

Explication Of Obligation And Excellence Of Repentance

It should be known that obligation of repentance is evident in the Qur'an and the Prophetic Tradition, and it is manifest in the light of discernment to him whose discernment has developed and whose heart Allah has laid open to the light of faith, so that he is capable of advancing in this light amidst the murk of ignorance, without need of a guide in every step.

A follower of the way (to the hereafter) may be blind, and must have a guide to direct his steps; or his vision may be good enough, and he will be guided to the beginning of the way whence he will guide himself. In the way of religion, men are similarly divided. There is the limited who are unable to transcend blind imitation of past authority, and require, at each step, a text from Allah's book or the tradition of his prophet "peace be upon him" and in the absence of such a passage he may become perplexed, and, though he lives long and be most diligent, such a man's progress may be limited, and his steps failing. Another is the happy man whose heart Allah has opened to an acceptance of Islam, and who is illumined by Allah. He will respond to the slightest indication to follow a difficult path and overcome tiresome obstacles. The light of the Qur'an and the faith will glow in his heart, and, due to the intensity of his inner illumination, the slightest explanation will suffice him. It is as if his oil would shine even if no fire touched it; and if the fire touched it then it would be light upon light. Allah guides to his light whom he will. Such a man has no need for a traditional text at every turn.

A person like that, if he desires to understand the obligation of repentance, examines, through the light of discernment, what is the nature of repentance, then he scrutinizes what is the meaning of Obligation, then he combines these, and there will be no doubt as to his perseverance therein: That is, he knows that the meaning of the obligatory is that which is obligatory for attainment of eternal bliss and deliverance from everlasting damnation. For unless 'happiness and misery are dependent on some action or its Omission, describing the act as being obligatory would be meaningless. The statement, 'it became obligatory by being given obligation (in some impersonal way)', is mere verbiage. For, in the case of an act where we have no purpose, near or distant, in doing it or leaving it undone and so has no meaning in busying ourselves with it, whether or not someone else made it obligatory for us.

If man understands the concept of obligation (of repentance), that it is the means to eternal bliss; that there is no bliss in the Hereafter except in the meeting with Allah Almighty; that everyone barred therefrom is no doubt suffering, feeling separated from the object of his desire, and seared by the flame of separation and hellfire; that what keeps him away from meeting Allah is following the desires and lusts and fondness for this ephemeral world and the pursuit of affection for something which he inevitably must leave; that nothing can bring near the presence of Allah except the severance of his heart's attachment to the vanity of this life, complete responsiveness to Allah, in search of intimacy with Him by constantly remembering Him and by love for Him, in the knowledge of His Majesty and Beauty, to the extent of man's capability; and that the

transgressions which constitute turning from Allah and following the delights of the devils, those enemies of Allah that keep one away from His presence, are the cause of man's being shut off, kept out from (the presence) of Allah; then there is no doubt that renunciation of the path leading away (from Allah) is obligatory in order to achieve closeness to Him.

Renunciation, however, is achieved by Knowledge, Regret, and Determination. As long as man knows not that sins are the causes for the remoteness of the Beloved, he will neither, regret nor grieve over his traveling on the path of withdrawal. As long as he has not grieved, he will not turn back, given that retreat is abandonment and determination. No doubt, these three elements are necessary in reaching the Beloved. Such is then Faith that derives from the light of perception.

As for the (ordinary) man who is not qualified for such a station, whose climax transcends the bounds of most people, he has ample scope, through the blind imitation of convention and example, to attain salvation from damnation. Let him take heed of the statements of Allah Almighty, His prophet "peace be upon him" and the righteous predecessors.

Allah says: " And O you Believers! turn you all together towards Allah, that you may attain Bliss." (An-Nur 31)

﴿ وَتُوبُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

He further says: "O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance: in the hope that your Lord will remove from you your ills and admit you to Gardens beneath which Rivers flow." (At-Tahrim 8)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ تُوبُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ﴾

The meaning of 'sincere' in the verse is to be sincere to Allah, free of blemish. The word is derived from 'sincere advice'. The excellence of repentance is stated by Allah in His saying: " For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean." (Al-Baqarah 222)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلتَّوَّٰبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The repentant is dear to Allah, and he who repents of sin is as the one who has no sin." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "Allah is happier with the repentance of His faithful servant than the man who is accompanied by his camel carrying his provisions, and when he came to an arid desert, he laid down his head and napped. He awoke and his camel has gone. He searched for it until the heat and thirst overcame him. He said: "I will return whence I started and sleep until I die." He proceeded to place his head upon his arm so as to die. Then, he awoke, and lo, his camel stood before him, provisions intact. Allah's joy at the repentance of the faithful servant is more intense than that of the man on account of (the return of) his camel." (Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud

and Anas). According to another version, he said, out of his great joy and desire of thanking Allah: "I am your lord and you are my servant."

It is narrated on the authority of Al-Hassan Al-Basri that he said: When Allah forgave Adam, the angels congratulated him. Gabriel and Michael descended to him and said: "O Adam, may you delight in Allah's forgiveness!" Adam "peace be upon him" replied: " O Gabriel, if a question remains after this pardon, what is my standing?" Allah, then, revealed to him: " O Adam, you have bequeathed your descendants toil and hardship but also repentance. Whoever of them shall call upon Me, I shall respond to him as I did to you. Whoever shall seek pardon, I shall not withhold it from him, for I am nigh and responsive! O Adam, I shall gather up the repentants from their graves happy and laughing, with their supplication answered."

There are innumerable traditions on the subject, and there is within the community a general consensus on its obligation. For its meaning is the recognition that sins and iniquities are destructive and remove Man from Allah. This sense is part and parcel of the obligation of Faith. At times, however, disregard of it may occur. Knowledge means the elimination of this disregard. There is no doubt of the obligatory nature of repentance. Among the various aspects of repentance are the abandonment of iniquities in the present; resolve to abstain in the future; and correction of previous shortcomings. Of the obligation of these, there is no doubt. As for regret and sadness of past offenses, surely this is obligatory. It is the very spirit of repentance which includes full rectification. How could this not be obligatory? Nay, it is a sort of pain one suffers following the realization of how much of lifetime has passed and was wasted in the wrath of Allah.

You may ask: "Heart anguish is a necessary state about which one has no choice. How then can it be classified as an obligation?" in reply to that, it should be known that such anguish is caused by the certain knowledge of having missed the Beloved. Man has a path by which to grasp its cause. In this

sense, knowledge can be classified as obligatory. It cannot, however, be understood as a self-induced creation of man, for this would be absurd. Rather, Knowledge, Regret, Action, Volition, Capacity and the carrier are all creations and deeds of Allah. "Allah has created you and (all) that you do." (As-Saffat 96)

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

This is what men of insight consider true, and all else is wrong.

You may also ask: "Does man, then, have no choice in action and abandonment?" The answer is in the affirmative. Yet this does not contradict our previous statement that everything stems from Allah's creation. So, also, does choice. Man is compelled in that choice which is his. Indeed when Allah creates the right hand, delicious food and the appetite for food in the stomach, He also creates the innate awareness that this food would appease the craving. He also produces the opposing notions: Does or does not this food, while appeasing the craving, also contain harm and, perhaps, there is some objection to it, making its consumption objectionable. Further, He creates the knowledge that there is no obstacle. When these factors converge, there emerges a resolve motivating

consumption. The emergence of the resolve, then, after vacillating between contradictory notions, and following on the intense appetite for the food, is called choice. It is inevitable that it should set in upon the convergence of all these conditions. Then, as resolve emerges through Allah's creation of these conditions, the right hand duly rises towards the food. For after volition and ability are attained, the following of the act is necessary so that the movement is produced. Thus, the movement is by Allah's creation, following the attainment of ability and the emergence of the resolve, both also of Allah's creation. The emergence of volition follows real appetite and the recognition that there are no objections, again by Allah's creation. But some of these creations follow others in an order habitual in Allah's creation: "you shall not find for the way of Allah aught of change." (Al-Ahzab 62; Al-Fath 23)

﴿وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ تَبۡدِيلٗا ۝٦٢﴾، ﴿وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ تَبۡدِيلٗا ۝٢٣﴾

Allah does not create the movement of the hand in orderly writing so long as He has not created in the hand the quality of capacity, life and emerging will, nor does He create a firm resolve as long as He has not brought forth desire and inclination in the soul. This inclination is not fully induced until there is knowledge that it suits the soul either immediately or ultimately. Knowledge, also, comes about only by other elements going back to movement, will and knowledge. Knowledge and natural disposition, then, always entail firm resolve. Movement always follows power and resolve. Such is the order of each action. All of it derives from divine origination.

Some of His creatures are preconditions of others and, therefore, some will have to precede others, e.g., will appears only after knowledge, which comes only with life, which emerges only after the creation of the body. The creation of the body is, therefore, requisite for the incidence of life but not in the sense that life is generated from the body. Likewise, the creation of life is a condition for the creation of knowledge, but not in the sense that knowledge is born of life. Yet, there is no ready receptacle for knowledge except it be alive. The creation of knowledge is then a requisite for the emerging resolve but not in the sense that knowledge engenders resolve. But only a live and knowing body is receptive of a state of volition.

Nothing exists except that which is possible, and possibility is an ordained order which does not tolerate change, for such would be an absurdity. As soon as the precondition of a quality exists, the carrier endowed with it is created to receive the quality. This quality, then, is attained through divine grace and eternal power, once the disposition has set in. Inasmuch as the disposition, on account of the preconditions, has (preordained) order, the flow, by Allah's directives, of events has a set order, and Man, then, is the arena of these divine preordained successive events. These events are regulated by divine decree, which is as the twinkling of an eye, in a universal and unchangeable order. Their manifestation is so predestined in detail that man cannot transcend them. This is referred to by Allah's statement: "We have created all things according to a fixed decree." (Al-Qamar 49)

﴿ إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَٰهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴾

Concerning the absolute and eternal decree He says: " And Our Command is but a single (Act), like the twinkling of an eye." (Al-Qamar 50)

﴿ وَمَآ أَمْرُنَآ إِلَّا وَٰحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍۭ بِٱلْبَصَرِ ﴾

Men are subject to the flow of fate and divine decree. Part of destiny is the creation of the movement in the hand of the writer after the creation of a special quality in the hand which quality is termed capacity. This follows the introduction of a strong and definite inclination, called Intent, in man's soul. This succeeds knowledge of the object of his inclination, which is called Awareness and Perception.

When, from the hidden reaches of the invisible dominion, these four elements appear upon the body of a man, who is subject to the compulsion of fate, the people of the visible world, barred as they are from the invisible and sublime dominion, come and say: "O man, you who have moved, aimed and written." But proclaimed from behind the veil of the transcendental and the whirlwind of majesty, it is announced: "when you have aimed it is not you that has aimed but Allah." (Al-Anfal 17)

﴿ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَمَىٰ ﴾

When you have killed, it is not you that have done it But "fight them, Allah chastises them at your hands."

The minds of those sitting in the middle of the sensible world are confused. Some call it mere predestination *(Jabr Mahd)*, others pure indeterminism *(Ikhtira' Sirf)*. Yet others mediate and tend towards the theory of acquisition *(Kasb)*. If the gates of heaven were opened to them and they looked into the transcendental world, it would become apparent to them that each one is right in a sense, and yet all share in failure, and not one of them had fathomed the matter in all its aspects. Complete perception of it is attained by illumination through an aperture reaching into the invisible world. Allah knows the hidden world and the manifest. He reveals this hidden realm only to such a messenger with whom He is well-pleased. The manifest may be perceived by one who has not come within the scope of (His) satisfaction. To him, who sets into motion the chain of causes and results, and knows the manner of its sequence and the nature of its connection to the primal cause, the secret of destiny is disclosed, and he acquires certainty that there is no creator and originator barring Allah.

If you say: "As you have concluded that each of these respective advocates of predestination, free will and acquisition is correct, to some degree, but also falls short of truth, are you not positing a contradiction? How can such a situation be understood? Is it possible to explain this through a parable?" In reply to that, it should be known to you that its example is like a group of blind men who heard that a strange animal, called an elephant, had been brought to the town but none of them had seen its shape nor had they heard its name. They said: "We must inspect and know it by touch of which we are capable." So, they sought it out, and when they found it they groped about it. One of them grasped its leg,

another its tusk and the third its ear. Then they said: "Now we came to know it." When they departed, the other blind men questioned them but the three differed in their answers. The one who felt the leg said: "The elephant is similar to a coarse cylinder outside although it appears to be softer than that." The one who had felt the tusk said: "It is not as he says. It is solid without any softness on it. It is smooth, not coarse. It is not at all stiff but rather it resembles a column." The third man, who had grasped the ear, said: "By my life, it is soft and somewhat coarse. One of them is right but it is not like a column or a cylinder. It is rather, like broad, thick hide." Now, each of these presented a true aspect when he related what he had gained from experiencing the elephant. None of them had strayed from the true description of the elephant. Yet, together, they fell short of fathoming the true appearance of the elephant. Ponder this parable and learn from it. It is the pattern of most human controversies. If these words touch the sciences of Disclosure (Mukashafah) and provoke ripples therein, this was not our intention. Let us, then, return to our present concern, i.e., the fact that repentance with its three elements: Knowledge, Regret and Renunciation is obligatory. Regret comes within the scope of obligation as this occurs in all of Allah's actions that are interposed between man's knowledge and his will and power. That which answers this description is included in the term 'obligation.

Explication That Promptness Is (Essential In Fulfilling) Obligation Of Repentance

There is no doubt that promptness is (essential in fulfilling) this obligation, since perception of sins' destructive nature is out of faith, which is immediately obligatory. Its obligation is profoundly grasped by him whom this keeps from reprehensible action. Indeed this perception is not of the Disclosure (Mukashafah) sciences which are independent of action. Rather, it is of the sciences of practical religion. Every (item of) knowledge that is intended to be a stimulus to action has not been fully perceived as long as it has not become such a stimulus. The knowledge of sins' harm was intended to be a stimulus to renouncing them. He, then, who has not abandoned sin is failing in this part of faith. Such is the intent of the statement of the Messenger of Allah “Allah's blessing and peace be upon him”: "The adulterer does not commit adultery at the time of fornication while he is a believer." (both sheikhs on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

His intent is not the denial of the faith which pertains to the Mukashafah sciences, such as knowledge of Allah, His unity, His attributes, His scriptures and Apostles. Indeed, adultery and sin do not preclude that. Rather, he thereby means denial of the belief that adultery alienates (one) from Allah and leads to abomination. It is similar to the case in which a physician says: "This is deadly poison, do not take it." If the patient then takes it, it can be said (that) he took it as a non-believer, not in the sense that he lacks belief in the existence of the physician or in his being a physician, nor due to the patient's distrust of the physician. Rather, what is meant is that the patient distrusts the physician's statement that the compound is a lethal toxin. Indeed, he who knows (the nature of) the toxin will not take it at all.

The sinner, of necessity, lacks in faith. Faith is not one variety but rather over seventy the highest point of which is to bear testimony that there is only one God, and the lowest point of which is to remove harm from the road. It is similar to the statement that man is not one creature but rather over seventy the highest of which is the heart and spirit, and the lowest is keeping harm from the outer skin so that the mustache will be shaven, the nails cut and the skin free of scum so that he is set apart from the beasts soiled by their detestable dung, with their long claws and hooves. This is a proper simile.

Faith is similar to man. The loss of the affirmation of (God's) unity produces total futility like the loss of the spirit. He who has nothing save the affirmation of Allah's unity and of (Muhammad's) mission is like a man whose limbs are cut off, whose eyes have gouged out, and who has lost all his organs, both internal and external, except the spiritual element. Just as he, who is in this condition, is close to death, the weak and solitary spirit, bereft of the limbs which support it and give it strength, abandoning him, so he, who is deficient in works, has naught save the root of faith is near to having the (whole) tree of his faith uprooted when, preceding the approach and arrival of the Angel of Death, the tempest which dislocates faith strikes the tree.

Any faith that is not firmly rooted in certitude nor branched out in action will not withstand the stormy terror of the Angel of Death, and may be in danger of an evil end, unlike faith that is tempered continuously with pious deeds until faith is firmly anchored. The statement of the disobedient to the obedient (servant): "I am a believer just as you are a believer" is like the statement of the pumpkin tree to the stone pine: "I am a tree and you are a tree." How apt is the pine's retort when it says: "When the autumn winds blow you will surely realize your foolishness in including (us both under the same) nomenclature, for then your roots will be severed, your leaves will fall away, and your conceit in sharing the name 'tree', as well as your heedlessness of the conditions of a tree's stability, will be made apparent." When the dust settles, you will see, If it's a horse you're riding, or an ass. This matter will become apparent at the end. The arteries of Gnostics collapse in fear of the vicissitudes of death and its terrible foreshadowing *which* only very few will withstand.

The sinner, fearless of eternal hellfire because of the evil consequence of his disobedience,is like the healthy man who, addicted to injurious passions, is not, while in his healthy state, afraid of death. Indeed death does not usually occur suddenly. He may be told: "The healthy man fears sickness, then, if he takes ill he fears death. So, the sinner fears a bad end, then, when, Allah forbid, his end is bad, he is consigned to eternal hellfire."

Sins are to faith like toxic foods to the body. They keep accumulating inside (the body) until the component elements change, imperceptibly, and the composition deteriorates and suddenly the man falls ill, then, suddenly, dies. So is the sinner. If a man afraid of ruination in this passing world must, immediately and constantly, abandon toxic substances and harmful foods, so too, and even more so must he who fears eternal perdition. If a man who consumed poison, then felt regret, would need to vomit and discontinue the consumption of poison by invalidating and removing it from the stomach in the quickest manner, to save his body which is on the verge of death, the loss merely of this ephemeral world,

then, he who consumes what is toxic to religion, that commits sins, is even more obliged to desist from these sins by correcting whatever is possible so long as there remains time for correction, namely (the remainder of his) lifetime.

For, what is feared from this toxin is the loss of everlasting life which contains lasting bliss and the great kingdom; its loss entails the fire of Hell and lasting chastisement which is so much that multiples of life in this world are less than one tenth of a tenth of its duration, given that it has no end at all. Hurry, hurry, then, to repent before the toxic sins do their work on the spirit of faith, and the matter will transcend physicians and their knowledge After which seeking shelter will avail naught nor will counsel and admonition, and man may be included in the damned, as He Almighty says: " We have put yokes round their necks right up to their chins, so that their heads are forced up (and they cannot see). And We have put a bar in front of them and a bar behind them, and further, We have covered them up; so that they cannot see. The same is it to them whether you admonish them or you do not admonish them: They will not believe." (Ya Sin 8:10)

﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِىٓ أَعْنَـٰقِهِمْ أَغْلَـٰلًا فَهِىَ إِلَى ٱلْأَذْقَانِ فَهُم مُّقْمَحُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنۢ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَـٰهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَسَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

Do not be deluded by the word 'faith', claiming that the verse pertains to the unbeliever, since it has been explained to you that faith is of over seventy branches, and that 'the adulterer does not fornicate at the time he is committing adultery while he is a believer', he then who is barred from faith which is bough and branch, will be barred, in the end, from that faith which is the root. Just as the man who, bereft of limbs, which are the branches, will be led to final death of that spirit which is the root. That is because the root has no continuity without the branch, nor has the branch existence without the root. There is no difference between the root and the branch except in one point: the existence and continuity of the branch requires the existence of the root while the existence of the root does not require the existence of the branch. The continuity of the root, then, lies in the branch, and the branch draws its existence from the root.

Likewise the sciences of Disclosure and the sciences of practical religion are as inseparable as the root and branch. Neither can dispense with the other even though one of them has a primary status and the other is secondary. If the sciences of practical religion have not become a stimulus to action, their non-existence is preferable to their existence. If they have not carried out their intended function, they turn into a supportive argument against their student. Therefore, the chastisement of the immoral learned is greater than that of the immoral ignorant, as can be seen from the Traditions we cited in the Book of Knowledge.

Explication Of Universality Of Obligation Of Repentance From Which None Is Free.

It should be known to you that the apparent meaning elicited from the text of the Qur'an has already indicated this, as shown from the statement of Allah Almighty: " And O you Believers! turn you all together towards Allah, that you may attain Bliss." (An-Nur 31)

﴿ وَتُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

Thus He universally addressed all believers. The light of the mind also advises so, as the meaning of repentance is the retreat from the road which leads away from Allah and draws (man) nigh unto Satan. That is conceived only by one endowed with reason. The natural disposition of the intellect is fulfilled only after the fullness of the instincts of desire, anger and the rest of the negative qualities which are Satan's instruments for the enticement of man.

The perfection of the intellect comes at the age of about forty; its foundation becomes complete only at puberty and its rudiments appear at the age of seven. The passions are the soldiers of Satan, and the minds those of the angels. When they come together, combat, of necessity, breaks up between them, as one does not yield to the other, they being adversaries.

The strife between them is like the struggle between night and day, light and darkness. Whenever the one gains ascendancy, the other is, necessarily, roused. If the desires mature during childhood or adolescence, before the perfection of the intellect, then the satanic forces have preceded and mastered the situation. Familiarity and intimacy with Satan befall the heart, no doubt, as usual requisites of the desires. This overcomes man and makes it difficult to abstain therefrom. Then the intellect, which is Allah's troop and force, emerges to save, gradually, those favoured by Allah, from the hands of His enemies. But if the mind is not strong and perfect, the kingdom of the heart surrenders to Satan, and the Evil One carries out his promises: "I shall verily master his progeny, save a few." (Al-Isra' 62)

﴿ لَأَحْتَنِكَنَّ ذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

But if the intellect is perfect and strong enough, its first occupation is to suppress the satanic forces by breaking the appetites and habits and by forcefully reverting the natural disposition to acts of worship. Only this is the meaning of repentance. It is the return from that road whose guide is lust and whose sentry is Satan, to Allah's path.

In every human being passion prevails over intellect; the impulse which is a device of Satan prevails over the impulse which is an instrument of the angels. Every human being, be he Prophet or fool, must abandon the steps taken to promote desire. On no account should you suppose that this is peculiar to Adam "peace be upon him". It has been said: "Do not suppose that only Hind (shows) treachery as a personal temper. Every songstress is like Hind." Rather, it is an eternal rule, the fate of humankind, which no decree can alter so long as there is no variance in the immutable divine way.

Consequently, anyone who has come of age as an ignorant disbeliever must repent from his ignorance and disbelief. If he has come of age as a Muslim, following his parents, yet negligent of the real meaning of Islam, he must repent from his negligence by comprehension of the meaning of Islam. Indeed, his parents' Islam is of no avail to him so long as he himself does not turn Muslim. If he has understood that, then he must turn from his practice and propensity for following the desires, without anyone to divert him, and turn toward the pattern

of the divinely set limits in prevention, release, absolution and renunciation. This is of the hardest kinds of repentance, and it is the ruin of most, as they fail therein. All this is retreat and repentance. It points to (the fact) that repentance is an obligatory duty binding upon every person. It is unimaginable that anybody can be exempted from it, as Adam was not either. The constitution of the progeny cannot accommodate that which the original constitution of the progenitor could not.

As for the explanation of the constancy and universality of this obligation, it is that no man is free from sins by his limbs; for even the prophets were not free of them, as is mentioned in the Qur'an and Prophetic Traditions about the sins of the prophets: How the prophets got rid of, and repented from them. If a man, in some cases, is free of sin by commission, he is not free of thinking about sin in his mind. If he is free, sometimes, from such thought, he is not free of satanic temptation by instigation of sporadic thoughts distracting from invoking Allah's name. But even if he is free therefrom, he would not be free from heedlessness and shortcoming in the knowledge of Allah, His attributes and acts. All this is a shortage which has its causes. Abandonment of its causes, by taking refuge to their opposites, is a turning from a path to one leading to the opposite direction. The intent of repentance is (such a) turning.

Freedom from this shortage in humans is inconceivable, but they differ as to the extent of shortage. Yet, basically there is no escape from it. That is why the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily my heart is beclouded so that I pray for forgiveness of Allah seventy times per day." (Muslim and Abu Dawud on the authority of Al-Agharr Al-Muzni with a slight variation of wording). For this reason, Allah honoured him, by saying: "that Allah may forgive you that which has preceded of sin and that which shall follow." (Al-Fath 2)

﴿ لِّيَغْفِرَ لَكَ ٱللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنۢبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

If such was the case of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", what could another person expect?

You may say: "It is obvious that the concerns and thoughts that overtake the heart are a blemish, and that perfection consists of freedom from them; that the defective cognition of the essence of Allah's sublimity is a deficiency, and as cognition grows, so does perfection increase; that the transition from the sphere of deficiency toward perfection is also a turning away and that turning away is repentance. These, however, are virtues not (religious) precepts. You have made a statement on the obligation of repentance under all conditions. Yet, repentance of these matters is not obligatory, as the attainment of perfection is not obligatory under Islamic law. What then is intended by your statement: "Repentance is obligatory under all conditions"?"

In reply to that, it should be known, as it has already been stated, that basically, by his very nature, man cannot but follow his desires. The meaning of repentance is merely not to abandon them. Rather, full repentance includes the correction of that which has passed. From each desire that a man pursues, a darkness rises onto his heart, as a dark spot is picked up from man's breath by the

surface of a polished mirror. If the darkness of the desires accumulates, it forms a stain, as the gathering vapor of breath becomes dross on the surface of the mirror. As it is stated in the Qur'an: "no indeed, but that which they were earning has rusted upon their hearts." (Al-Mutaffiffin 14)

﴿ كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

When the rust collects it becomes characteristic and it is imprinted onto the heart, like the dross on the surface of the mirror, when the dross accumulates over a long time, becomes immersed in the iron and corrupts it: the metal will not take further polishing, and becomes imprinted with the slag. In correcting (the evil consequences of) following the appetites, it is not enough to abandon them in the future. It is necessary to wipe out those stains that impressed themselves upon the heart. Likewise, the future elimination of breath and vapor that darken the mirror's surface will not suffice for clear reflection in the mirror, as long as no effort is made to wipe out the stain that had imprinted itself in the mirror.

Just as darkness will arise onto the heart from (the commission) of sins and (the pursuit of) appetites, so a light will arise upon it from acts of obedience and abstention from the appetites. The darkness of sin will then be eradicated by the light of obedience, as referred to by the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Follow an evil deed with a good deed, perchance it would wipe it out." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Dharr). Consequently, in any given situation, man will not be free of the need to eliminate from his heart the traces of evil by pursuit of good deeds, whose influence would contravene the effects of those evil deeds. This is applicable to a heart which has first had its purity and clarity, and then became dark due to obstructive factors. As for the initial burnishing, it is a protracted affair, because polishing to remove rust from the mirror is unlike the initial work of producing the mirror. Such operations are long lasting, never ending. All this applies to repentance.

As for your statement that this cannot be called obligatory, but is rather a virtue and search for perfection, it should be known to you, then, that (the term) 'obligatory' has two meanings. One of them is that which falls within the scope of a legal decision and which applies to all the people. It is the measure with which, if all mankind were to observe it, the world would not be destroyed. If all men were truly bent on fearing Allah, they would abandon (the pursuit) of livelihood and would forsake the world totally. That would lead to the total nullity of piety. For whenever livelihood is impaired, no one has the leisure for piety. Rather, occupation in weaving and cultivation and (baking) bread absorbs everyone's life totally, according to his needs. From this point of view, none of these stages (freedom from sinful thought in quest for perfection) is obligatory.

The other meaning of the obligatory is that which is essential for attaining the sought after closeness to Allah And the good abode among the righteous. Repentance from all we have mentioned (of sins) is necessary to attain it, As it is said: purification is obligatory for a voluntary prayer for anybody who desires

to perform it. Indeed, he will not come by it without that purification. On the other hand, for him who is satisfied with the omission of and preclusion from the virtue of voluntary service, purification, on its account, is not obligatory. This is the same when we say that The eye, ear, hand and leg are a requisite for the existence of man. That is to say, it is a requisite for him who desires to be a complete man, enjoying his humanity and seeking thereby to attain the noblest rank in this world. But he who is content with basic life and is satisfied to be like meat on the block and like a cast off rag, for such a life the eye, hand and foot are not requisite.

The root of the obligations, which enters the general mandate, brings one merely to the root of salvation. The root of salvation is like the root of life. The bliss beyond the root of salvation which shapes life flows through the limbs and tools by which life perfection is being prepared. It is this that the prophets, the saints, and the scholars sought, each according to his rank. That was their aspiration and quest, and it is for this that they totally rejected the pleasures of this world. Jesus "peace be upon him" came to rest his head on a stone to sleep. Satan then came to him and said: "Were you not (resolved) to forsake this world for the next?" Jesus "peace be upon him" answered: "Yes. What now?" Satan said: "Your use of this rock as a pillow is a worldly enjoyment. Why do you not place your head on the ground?" Jesus "peace be upon him" cast away the stone, and placed his head on the ground. His casting off of the rock was out of repentance from that (worldly) enjoyment.

Are you, then, of the opinion that Jesus "peace be upon him" did not know that placing the head on the ground is not, by general mandate, obligatory? Do you further think that our Prophet Muhammad "peace be upon him", when the marks of the garment he had on distracted him from his prayer until he removed the garment, or when the lace of his shoe, which was new, distracted him until he replaced it with an old one, did not know that such is not obligatory, according to the revelation he brought to all mankind? And, if he knew that, why did he repent through abstention from his deeds? Was that not because he saw (the amenities) acting upon his heart (in such a way as to) prevent him from reaching the station of praise which had been promised for him? Similarly, after Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" had drunk some milk and was informed that it was improper, he inserted his finger in his throat, gagging almost to the point of death, so as to bring (the milk) up. Do you think that he was so unaware of the rule of (Islamic) law by which anything eaten (of improper food) through ignorance (of its state), is not (an object of) guilt, and the food need not, according to jurisprudence, be evacuated? Then why did he repent from his drinking, by attempting, to the best of his ability, to empty his stomach of it? Was it not the conscience embedded within him which informed him that the general mandate is one thing and that the gravity of the path to the next world is (another) known only by the righteous?

Contemplate the state of these who, of Allah's creation, are most cognizant of Allah, of His path, of His scheme and of the hiding places of the Deluder. Beware lest the life of this world should delude you even once. Beware, beware a

million times of the Deluder's guile concerning Allah. These are mysteries. He, who sniffs them out early, knows that the need of sincere repentance with every breath, clings to the man who follows Allah's path, even if he lives as long as Noah "peace be upon him" does. He also. knows that this (repentance) is obligatory immediately and with no delay.

Indeed, Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani has told the truth when he said: "If the sensible man kept weeping for what remains of his life only over what he missed in breach of piety, this would be apt to aggrieve him unto death. How is it then for him who receives the remainder of his life with the same (behaviour) of his past ignorance?" He said this because if the sensible man possessed a precious gem and it was lost senselessly, certainly he would cry over it; if its loss were the cause of his own destruction, his weeping would be yet greater. Each hour of life, if not each breath, is a precious stone for which there is no substitute or exchange. It is beneficial for it leads you to eternal bliss and saves you from endless misery. Which gem is more precious than this? If you have lost it through negligence, you have suffered patent damage and if you have expended it in sin, then you have already perished repugnantly. If you do not weep over this sin, it is because of your ignorance. Your misfortune through ignorance is greater than any other. Ignorance, however, is a calamity in which the one stricken is unaware of his misfortune. Indeed, heedless slumber intervenes between man and his perception. Men are asleep, but when they die they awaken. At that time to every wretch his destitution is revealed, and to every afflicted person his misfortune. Yet correction is already out of their reach.

One of the mystics has said: "If the Angel of Death "peace be upon him" appeared to a man and informed him, "there remains one hour to your life, and you cannot be reprieved for even one moment", the man would experience such sorrow and grief, that if the whole world were all his, he would (be ready to) leave it for another hour to be added, just to enable him to seek Allah's pleasure and correct his own remissness. He will, however, find no way to accomplish this. This is the first meaning to appear from the statement of Allah Almighty: "and a barrier is set between them and that which they desire." (Saba' 54)

﴿ وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴾

This is also referred to by the His statement: " before Death should come to any of you and he should say, "O my Lord! Why did You not give me respite for a little while? I should then have given (largely) in charity, and I should have been one of the doers of good." But to no soul will Allah grant respite when the time appointed (for it) has come; and Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that you do." (Al-Munafiqun 10-11)

﴿ قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَآ أَخَّرْتَنِيٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ۝ وَلَن يُؤَخِّرَ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهَا ۚ وَٱللَّهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝ ﴾

It is said that the meaning of the 'The little while' the man requests (according to the verse) is that when the matter is disclosed to him, man says: "O Angel of Death, grant me an additional day, to plead to be excused by Allah, repent and

provide a good record for my soul." But the Angel replies: "The days have come to an end, and there is not a single day." The man says: "Then give me a respite for an hour." The Angel says: "The hours have lapsed and there is no additional hour." The gate of repentance is then closed to man, thereupon he gags, and breathes heavily in his bitter regret. He suffers the agony of despair about correction, and bitter sorrow over the waste of his lifetime. The very foundation of his faith will be (surely) shaken under these blows. When a man dies in Allah's grace, his soul expires with the words of the creed, and that (is to be considered) the good end. If he, Allah forbid, is doomed to wretchedness, he expires in doubt and confusion, and that is the bad end. In regard with him, it is said: "but Allah shall not turn towards those who do evil deeds until, when one of them is visited by death, he says, 'indeed now I repent." (An-Nisa' 18)

﴿ وَلَيْسَتِ ٱلتَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّى تُبْتُ ٱلْـَٔـٰنَ ﴾

And: "Allah shall turn only towards those who do evil in ignorance, then shortly repent." (An-Nisa' 17)

﴿ إِنَّمَا ٱلتَّوْبَةُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِن قَرِيبٍ ﴾

'Shortly' refers to temporal closeness in time to the offense, so that he repents from it and erases any trace of it through good works, substituting such for (the bad) before a stain beyond removal can accumulate upon the heart.

This is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah “Allah's blessing and peace be upon him”: "Follow an evil deed with a good deed, perchance it would eliminate it." Of this too, Luqman “peace be upon him” said to his son: "O My son, do not delay repentance for death comes suddenly. He who has put off the effort to repentance finds himself between the two great perils: one of them is that darkness, brought on by his sins, will accumulate upon his heart until it becomes deeply embedded grime beyond elimination; and the other is that sickness or death may befall him swiftly, giving him no time to engage in correction." That is what is narrated in a certain Prophetic tradition, that "most of the cries from those consigned to hellfire result from procrastination (of repentance from sins)."' It is this that accounts for perdition. Blackening of the heart is cash while purging it by obedient action is credit, until death snatches man, and he comes before Allah with an impaired heart. But only he is saved who comes before Allah with a sound heart. The heart is a trust left by Allah with man. So is a lifetime. The same is true of the other acts of worship. He who breaches this trust and does not make amends is in sore peril.

A mystic has said: "Indeed, Allah has entrusted to man, through inspiration, two secrets. Firstly, when man comes out of his mother's womb Allah says to him: "O My servant, I have brought you into the world clean and pure, and have consigned you life and entrusted it to you. Heed how you keep this trust safe, and consider how you shall meet Me (later)." Secondly, at the time of death He says: "O My servant, what have you done with my trust? Have you kept it safe until you would meet Me under the covenant, so that I would meet you as faithful? Or, have you forfeited it, so that I would meet you with claim and punishment?" This

is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Fulfill my covenant and I shall fulfill your covenant." (Al-Baqarah 40)

﴿ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ ﴾

And: "And who protect their trusts and covenant." (Al-Mu'minun 8; Al-Ma'arij 32)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴾

Explication Of The Fact That Repentance Is Surely Accepted Once Its Requisites Are Available

It should be known to you that if you have understood the concept of acceptance, you will not doubt that every correct repentance is accepted. Those who contemplate through the illumination that stem from the lights of the Qur'an know that every sound heart is received well by Allah, is enjoying in the next world nearness to Allah, and its master, through his immortal eye, is prepared to perceive Allah's countenance. They also know that, originally, the heart was created sound, since every creature has such a nature. This soundness, however, eludes man because of a murkiness which overcomes the surface of his heart from the pollution and darkness of sins. They are aware that the fire of regret can burn this pollution, and that the light of good deeds can obliterate the darkness of evil from the heart's surface, and that the darkness of transgressions has no power against the light of pious acts, just as the gloom of night is helpless in the face of the light of day; nay, just as the turbidity of filth cannot exist with the whiteness of soap; and as a king would not accept a dirty garment as his attire, so Allah does not admit a darkened heart into His presence; and just as the use of a garment for vile labor will soil it, and to clean it one needs to wash it with soap and warm water, so exposure of the heart to the desires fouls it, and to clean, purge and purify it, one needs to wash it in the flow of tears and the burning of regret. Every clean and pure heart is well received, just as every clean garment is. The purification and cleansing, however, are up to you.

As for acceptance, it is freely granted as irrevocably preordained. This is the so-called 'prosperity' in the statement of Allah: "Prosperous is he who purifies it." (Ash-Shams 9)

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا ﴾

He who does not know, strictly speaking, with a perception greater and clearer than that achieved through eyesight, that the heart is affected contrarily by sins and good deeds, using for the former, the metaphor 'darkness', as it is used also for ignorance, and for the latter, the metaphor 'illumination', as it is used also for knowledge; and that between illumination and darkness there exists a necessary unbridgeable contradiction; then he is as one to whom only the husk of religion was left with nothing attached save appellations. His heart is in a dense wrap (barred) from the essence of religion, if not even from his own essence and attributes. But he who is ignorant of himself, surely is yet more ignorant of another. I refer, in this, to his heart. Since knowledge of

another (lies) within his heart, how can he have (such) knowledge when he has no knowledge of his own heart?

He who fancies that the sound repentance could not be accepted is like him who imagines that the sun will rise but the darkness will also persist, or that a garment will be laundered with soap but the dirt will persist, unless it be that lengthy accumulation of filth penetrated into the interstices of the garment and spoiled it so that the soap will lack the strength to extricate it. Likewise the accumulation of sins may become stained and imprinted upon the heart. Such a heart cannot return and repent. Certainly, at times, a man says, with his tongue: "I have repented." Yet, that is like the fuller saying, with his tongue (alone): "I have cleaned the garment." But this will never clean the garment so long as he does not change the disposition of the garment by use of something effective against the filth ingrained in it. In this case repentance is fundamentally impossible. This is not unlikely but rather prevailing among all those creatures who devote themselves to this world and completely renounce Allah Almighty.

This explanation of the acceptance of repentance should be sufficient for men of discernment. But we shall support it by quoting Holy verses, Prophetic traditions and sayings of the Companions, for any reflection not attested to by the Book and the Prophetic tradition *is* not reliable:

Allah Almighty says: "It is he who accepts repentance from his servants, and pardons evil deeds." (Ash-Shura 25)

﴿ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَنِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾

He also says: "Forgiver of sins, accepter of repentance." (Ghafir 3)

﴿ غَافِرِ ٱلذَّنۢبِ وَقَابِلِ ٱلتَّوْبِ ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

There are many more Verses in this connection.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah rejoices in the repentance of (even) one of you more..." Joy is behind acceptance, and it indicates to acceptance, if not more than acceptance. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Indeed, Allah extends His hand with repentance until morning to him who sins at night, and to him who sins during the day He extends His hand until nightfall (and so on) until the sun would rise from its setting (putting an end to the acceptance of repentance)." (Muslim and At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Musa). Such Extension of the hand amounts to a call for repentance and the (attribute of) seeker is behind (the attribute of) accepter. Many are the receivers who do not seek but one does not seek unless he is (willing to) accept.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If you sinned until your sins reached the heaven, and then you repented, surely Allah would turn to you in repentance." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "Indeed a man can commit a sin and enter paradise with it." It was said to him: "How can this be, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied: "He will direct his attention to repent from it, in flight (from sin) until he enters paradise." (Ibn Al-Mubarak on the authority of Al-Hassan; and Abu Na'im on the authority of Abu

Hurairah). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The expiation of sin is repentance." (Ahmad, At-Tabarani and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Abbas). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said too: "He who repents from sin is like one who has never sinned."

It is narrated that an Abyssinian said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": " O Apostle of Allah, I used to commit shameful deeds, do I have (a chance) of repentance?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" answered in the affirmative. The Abyssinian turned away and then returned saying: "O Apostle of Allah, did He see me when I committed them?" He "peace be upon him" answered in the affirmative. (At this point) the man uttered a shout with which his soul departed. It is narrated that when Allah cursed Iblis, he asked for a respite. Allah granted him a respite until the Day of Judgement. (Iblis) said: "By Your glory, I would not leave the heart of the son of Adam so long as he lives." Allah replied: "By My glory and majesty, I would not bar repentance from (man) so long as he lives." (Ahmad, Abu Ya'li and Al-Hakim on the authority of Abu Sa'id). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Good deeds remove evil as water (washes away) dirt."

The Prophetic traditions in this matter are beyond calculation.

As for the sayings of the Companions and righteous predecessors, a mention may be made of the following:

Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab said: "Allah's statement: "Indeed he is forgiving of those that return" (Al-Isra' 25)

﴿ فَإِنَّهُۥ كَانَ لِلْأَوَّٰبِينَ غَفُورًا ﴾

Refers to man who sins, repents, sins and repents again. Al-Fudail said: Allah has said: "Announce to the sinners that if they repent I will accept their repentance; and warn the righteous that if I applied to them My justice, I would punish them." Talq Ibn Habib said: Allah's rights (upon man) are greater than man's capability; yet repent day and night." 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar "Allah be pleased with them" said: "If a man calls to mind an offense he perpetrated, then is afraid in his heart on account of that offense, then that sin is erased from him in the (celestial) Register."

It is narrated that one of the prophets of the Children of Israel sinned. Allah revealed to him: "By My glory, if indeed you do it again, I shall chastise you." The prophet replied: " O my Lord, You are You and I am I. By Your majesty, if You do not grant me immunity I will surely do it again." Thereupon Allah granted him immunity. One said: "If a man sins and does not cease to regret it until he enters paradise, Iblis says: "Would that I had not plunged him into sin." Habib Ibn Thabit said: "A man is confronted with his sins on the Day of Resurrection. Then he passes by a sin and says: "Verily, I was afraid of it." That man is forgiven."

It is narrated that a man asked Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" about a sin he committed: "did I have a chance of repentance?" Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" turned away from him, and when he turned back to him he saw tears flowing from his eyes. Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with

him" said to the man: "Indeed paradise has eight gates which open and close but the gate of repentance, guarded by a special angel, does not close. So, do (repent), and do not despair." 'Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Abu Al-Qasim said: "I conferred with 'Abd-Ar-Rahim about the repentance of an unbeliever and Allah's saying: "If they cease (what has already passed, it will be forgiven for them." (Al-Anfal 38)

﴿ إِن يَنتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُم مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ ﴾

On that he said: "I indeed expect that a Muslim will be better off with Allah. Yet, I have learnt that the repentance of a Muslim is like a (second and new) embracing of Islam after the original adherence thereto."

'Abdullah Ibn Salam "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I would not report to you except of a (duly) charged prophet or a revealed book. Indeed, when a man sins, then feels remorse because of it for as short as a twinkle of an eye, the sin falls away from him quicker than the twinkling of an eye." 'Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Sit in the company of repentants. Indeed, they are the most delicate of hearts." One said: "I know when Allah forgives for me." He was asked: "When?" he said: "When He turns to me in repentance." Another said: 'I am more afraid of being deprived of repentance than of being denied forgiveness. That is because forgiveness is certainly among the requisites and results of repentance."

It is narrated that there was among the Children of Israel a young man who had served Allah for twenty years, then defied Allah for another twenty years. Afterwards he gazed in a mirror and saw a gray hair in his beard. This aggrieved him and he said: "O My Lord, I obeyed You for twenty years, and disobeyed You for another twenty. If I return would you accept me?" He then heard a voice, although he saw no one: "You loved Us and We loved you; you abandoned Us and We abandoned you; you defied Us but We granted you respite; if you return, We will accept you."

Dhun-Nun Al-Misri said: "Allah has servants who planted trees of sins that were like guardians of the soul. They watered the trees with the water of repentance; the trees then produced regret and sadness. They became possessed without madness and idiotic without faltering or muteness. They are the profound, the eloquent, who knew Allah and His Messenger. They drank from the cup of purity and achieved forbearance throughout tribulation. They lost their hearts in the spiritual world and their thoughts roamed among the palaces veiling (Allah's) omnipotence. They sought shelter under the portico of regret, and read the ledger of sin. Then they were seized with anguish until they reached the height of asceticism on the ladder of piety. They found sweet the bitter (taste) of abandoning this world, and found supple the coarse bed, until they seized the thread of salvation and the grip of security. Their spirits roamed freely in the heights until they attained the gardens of pleasure. They plunged into the sea of life; filled in the trenches of anxiety and forded the bridges of passion until they descended to the courtyard of knowledge. They drank from the stream of wisdom; traveled on the ship of sagacity, and set sail, under the breeze of salvation, on the sea of security, until they reached the gardens of comfort, the source of glory and nobility."

This is sufficient to confirm that all true repentance is surely accepted.

But you might say: "Do you adopt what the Mu'tazilah have taught that the acceptance of repentance is obligatory upon Allah?"

In reply to that, let me say: In what I have mentioned of the necessity of Allah's acceptance of repentance I intend only what is intended by him who says: "Indeed, when a garment is cleansed with soap, the dirt must vanish; When the thirsty drinks water the thirst must cease; When he is, for awhile, denied water, he must become thirsty; if the thirst continues, this must lead to death." There is nothing in this of what the Mu'tazilah intended by the concept of obligation as regards Allah's actions. I would rather say that Allah created obedience as an atonement for sin, and good as an antidote to evil, as He created water as a remedy of thirst. His omnipotence is sufficient for the opposite should it have been His pleasure. There is, then, no obligation upon Allah but what His eternal Will has anticipated must, certainly, come to exist.

You might argue: "Every repentant doubts the acceptance of his repentance, while he who drinks water is certain of the abatement of thirst. Why then does he (the repentant) doubt?"

In reply to that, let me say that his doubt about acceptability (of his repentance) is like the doubt about the presence of the conditions of health. Repentance has delicate requisite props and conditions as will be mentioned later. The presence of all its requisites cannot be ascertained as if it were the case of one who doubts a laxative he took, i.e., will it work? That is because of his doubt in getting the requisites for relief by the medication in the given case, time, manner of mixing and preparing the remedy, and the potency of its various component drugs. Such and the like lead to fear even after repentance and, certainly, necessitate doubt about its acceptability, as will be seen, Allah willing, from the discussion of conditions of repentance.

SECOND PILLAR
ON CONTEXT OF REPENTANCE, SINS: TRIVIAL AND MORTAL

It should be known that repentance is the abandonment of sin. But it is impossible to abandon a thing unless it is perceived. Now since repentance is obligatory, it follows that anything, without which it cannot be achieved, must be obligatory. Sin is the deviation from Allah's command by omission or commission. A detailed exposition of this calls for an explanation of the whole range of Obligations. Such is not our intent. Yet, we shall indicate to their general principles and the interconnections of their constituent parts. Allah is the one who, with His mercy, helps to (reach) what is correct.

Exposition Of Divisions Of Sin In Relation To Qualities Of Man

First division

It should be known to you that man possesses many qualities and characteristics, as explained in the Book of Wonders and evils of Heart. The stimuli of sin, however, are included under four qualities: supremacy, devilry, bestiality and predatory. Such is the case, for man's substance is molded of different ingredients, each one resulting in a (different) effect, just as sugar,

vinegar and saffron exert, in oxymel, different influences.

The bent for the supremacy qualities, encourages such traits as prestige, glory, power, love of praise, appreciation and wealth, the desire for perpetuate life, and quest for superiority over all until it seems that man wishes to say, "I AM YOUR LORD, THE MOST HIGH." From these some of the greatest sins result, of which men are heedless, and which they do not reckon as sins. yet they are the great ravagers which are the source of most transgressions, as we have explained in detail in the Quarter of Destructives.

The second is the satanic quality from which derive envy, injustice, subterfuge, perfidy, instruction to immorality and deception, including corruption, hypocrisy, and the urge to (unlawful) innovation and error.

The third is the bestial quality from which derive gluttony, greed and desire for the fulfillment of the carnal appetites. From it derive also adultery, homosexuality, robbery, misappropriation of the property of orphans and all the other vanities for the sake of the appetites.

The fourth is the predatory quality from which derive anger, malice, assault, vilification, murder and waste of wealth. From these, various sins branch off.

These qualities have (a certain) gradation in human nature. The bestial quality is first predominant. It is followed by the predatory quality. Then, when the two get together and apply the mind to deceit, scheming and subterfuge, this is the satanic quality. Then, finally, the supremacy qualities prevail such as (the bent for) glory, power, arrogance, grandeur and control over all creatures.

These are the sources and origins of sin, from which the spring of sin gushes forth to the limbs. Some of them (pertain) especially to the heart, such as unbelief, heresy, hypocrisy and harboring evil designs; others (pertain specifically) to the eye and ear, or to the tongue, or the stomach and genitals, or the hands and feet; some to the entire body. As this is clear, there is no need to go into details.

Another division

It should be known that sins are divided into that which is between man and Allah, and that which pertains to the relation of man to man; that which concerns an individual man, such as abstention from prayer, fast or obligations particular to him; and that which concerns inter-human relations, such as abstention from almsgiving, murder, usurpation of property, vilification of people's honour, and anything that infringes on the rights of others, whether of life, limb, property, honour, belief or dignity; infringement on belief by leading astray and calling to heresy; incitement to transgression and to defiance against Allah, as practiced by certain preachers who cultivate hope over fear.

Sin that pertains to men is graver. In that which is between man and Allah (alone), unless it be polytheism, pardon is more expected. It is narrated in a tradition: "There are three accounts: one which is forgiven, one which is never forgiven, and one which is not neglected. The account which is forgiven is that of the sins between man and Allah. The account which is never forgiven is that of polytheism. The account which is not neglected is that of the injustices toward humans." (Ahmad and Al-Hakim on the authority of

A'ishah). That is, man must be called to settle them before he is forgiven.

Third division

Sins are divided into trivial and mortal. There is much disagreement about them. Some say that there is no trivial or mortal (sin), rather, every transgression of Allah's command is mortal sin. This position is weak since Allah said: "If you avoid the heinous sins that are forbidden you, we will acquit you of your evil deeds and admit you by the gate of honour." (An-Nisa' 31)

﴿ إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

And: "Those who avoid great sins and shameful deeds, only (falling into) small faults; verily your Lord is ample in forgiveness." (An-Najm 32)

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّمَمَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَٰسِعُ ٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The five (obligatory) prayers and (performance of) Friday (congregative prayer) to the next, atone for the sins that are committed between them, if mortal sins are avoided." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah). According to another version, "They are expiations for such (of sins as committed) between them except the mortal sins." It is further narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah Ibn 'Amr Ibn Al-'As "Allah be pleased with him" ,that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Ascribing partners to Allah, undutifulness to parents, murder and willful perjury are among the mortal sins." (Al-Bukhari).

The Companions and Tabi'is differed about the number of mortal sins, ranging from four, to seven, to nine, to eleven or more. Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "They are four." Ibn 'Umar "Allah be pleased with them" said: "They are seven." 'Abdullah Ibn 'Amr "Allah be pleased with him" said: "They are nine." When Ibn 'Umar's statement, that they are seven, reached Ibn 'Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" he said: "They are closer to seventy than seven." He once said: "All that Allah has forbidden constitute mortal sins." Another said: "Any (action for which) Allah has threatened hellfire is of the mortal sins." One of the righteous predecessors said: "Anything which necessitates (the execution of) legal punishment in this world is a mortal sin." It has been said that it is an obscure point, the number of which is not known, like the Night of Power or the hour of the Friday (at which the supplication receives answer). when Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" was asked about this, he said: "Read from the beginning of the Surah of An-Nisa' to verse thirty where Allah says: "If you avoid the heinous sins that are forbidden to you." (An-Nisa' 31)

﴿ إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

Everything that Allah has prohibited in this Surah to this point is a mortal sin."

Abu Talib Al-Makki said: "The mortal sins are seventeen. I collected them from all the traditions and from all that is gathered of the sayings of Ibn 'Abbas "Allah be pleased with them", Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him", Ibn 'Umar "Allah be pleased with them", and others. Four are of the heart:

polytheism, persistence in disobedience, despair of divine mercy, and false security from divine plot. Four are of the tongue: false testimony, false charge against chaste, willful perjury i.e., that which justifies a falsehood or perverts the truth, by which the property of a Muslim is seized wrongly, even a toothpick, and it is called 'plunger' *(Ghamus)* because it plunges its perpetrator into hellfire), and sorcery which through any speech alters man or other substances from the states fixed at Creation. Three are of the stomach: drinking wine or getting any intoxicating drink, eating illicitly, and from the property of an orphan, and conscious usury. Two are of sexual nature: adultery and homosexuality. Two are of the hands: murder and theft. One is of the feet: flight (from the enemies) in the battlefield, one from two and ten from twenty. One is of the entire body: undutifulness to parents." He resumed: "The peak of undutifulness is that if they justly adjure (the son) he does not respect their appeal; if they ask something from him, he does not give it to them; if they rebuke him he hits them; if they are hungry he does not feed them."

This is what he said, and it is plausible. Complete satisfaction, however, will not be gleaned from it, since it is possible both to add to it or subtract from it. Thus he has listed usury and embezzlement of an orphan's property as mortal sins, given that they are misappropriation of property. But of criminal acts he mentioned only murder as a mortal sin. Yet, gouging the eye, cutting off the hands and torture of Muslims by beating and types of punishment, did not occur to him. Surely, beating and torturing an orphan, and amputating his limbs are graver than embezzling his property. It is narrated in a certain tradition: "Excessive reviling, and detraction from the reputation of a fellow Muslim are mortal sins." (Ahmad and Abu Dawud, according to Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami, on the authority of Sa'id Ibn Zaid). This is graver than slander of the chaste. Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri “Allah be pleased with him” and other Companions said: "Indeed you are doing things which are, in your eyes, finer than a hair, even though in the time of the Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him" we used to reckon them as mortal sins." (Ahmad and Al-Bazzar).

A faction said: "Any premeditated (evil act) and anything that Allah has forbidden are mortal sins." To clarify this, take the case of the investigator of theft: as to whether or not it is a major crime, will not be sound so long as one does not understand the meaning of mortal sin. What is intended by this is like the statement: Is theft prohibited or not? There is no hope of clarifying this without first establishing the essence of 'prohibition, and then, finding out whether that essence is present in theft.

Major sin', then, is lexically vague and has no specific connotation, either in (Arabic) lexicography or in (Islamic) law. This is due to the fact that 'major' and 'minor' are modifiers. Any sin is major in comparison to what is beneath it and minor in comparison to what is above it. To lie down with an alien female is a major sin relative to gazing (at her), and a minor sin in comparison to fornication. Amputation of a Muslim's hand is a major sin relative to beating him and minor in comparison to killing him.

It is true that the action for which hellfire was set can be called a mortal sin.

By this appellation we mean to say that the punishment of hellfire is grave. Man can also apply the term 'mortal' to that action which necessitates a legal punishment, for that which hastens a necessary punishment in this world is grave. He may also apply (the same term) to that which is mentioned in the text of the Book as interdicted, for he can say that its specification in the Qur'an indicates the act's gravity. Then, again, since the Qur'anic stipulations also differ in their gradation, it will certainly be both grave and mortal by comparison. To these applications there is no objection, and preserved expressions of the Companions vacillate between these points. Possibly they can be reduced to one of these cases.

It is true then, that it is important to know the meaning of Allah's saying: "If you avoid the heinous sins that are forbidden you, we will acquit you of your evil deeds and admit you by the gate of honour." (An-Nisa' 31)

﴿ إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

And (the meaning of) the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "'Prayers are atonement for such (of sins as committed) between them except mortal sins." Indeed, this is the ruling principle on mortal sin. The truth of the matter is that sins are divided, according to the view of Sharia, into those known as grave; those known to be counted among the trivial sins; and those in which there is doubt and the rule about them is unknown. To strive for a comprehensive definition or a definite figure is to strive for the impossible. For this is impossible unless it is heard from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "By mortal sins I meant ten or five..." listing them. But as this is not reported, though in some versions "three or seven are among the mortal sins "or "blasphemy is one of the mortal sins", it becomes clear that no specific number was meant. How could one then aspire to set a specific number when the divine law does not? Perhaps Sharia intended to obscure it so that men would be in dread, as they are on the Night of Power, *to* increase (thereby) men's diligence in searching for it.

Surely, we have an overall method which enables us to know the categories and types of mortal sin, upon investigation. As for its main manifestations we know them by contemplation and approximation. We also know the greatest of mortal sins. But, as for the most minor of the trivial sins, there is no way of knowing it. The point is that we know, by the testimony of both the Divine law and the illumination of insight, that the purpose of all the precepts is to lead men into the closeness of Allah and the bliss of meeting Him; and that men can attain this only through perception of Allah, His attributes, books and prophets. This is indicated by the verse: "I have not created jinn and mankind except to serve Me." (Adh-Dhariyat 56)

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

That is, to be My servitors. Yet, man (the servitor) cannot be a servant so long as he has not perceived his master in His mastery, and himself in his servitude. Man must know himself and his Master.

This, indeed, is the ultimate purpose of the mission of prophets. But it could be fulfilled only in the life of this world. This is the meaning of the statement of

the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "This world is a place to cultivate for the hereafter." Maintenance of this world thus becomes the domain of religion, inasmuch as the world is a means of fulfilling religion. Two things of this world are connected with the hereafter: human beings and possessions. Anything which stands in the way of the perception of Allah is the gravest of mortal sins, the next being that which is destructive of human life, and the next is that which impedes the livelihood of men. These are three stages. The intent of all the creeds is that the hearts must hold the perception (of Allah), the bodies preserve life, and humans preserve possessions. It is unimaginable that these three matters would be debatable among the various creeds. It is, then, inconceivable that Allah would send a prophet, desiring thereby the improvement of His creatures in their affairs, both spiritual and material, and then He would command them to do what impedes them from perceiving Him and His messengers, or that He would command them to destroy life and property.

It follows that mortal sins are of three levels. The first level is that which prevents (man) from perception of Allah and His Messengers. This is disbelief, and there is no mortal sin greater than disbelief, for it is ignorance that is the barrier between Allah and man, and man's means to draw nigh to Allah is knowledge and perception. Man's closeness (to Allah) corresponds to the measure of man's perception while his remoteness (from Him) corresponds to the measure of his ignorance. That ignorance called disbelief is followed by (man's feeling of) security from Allah's plots and despair of His mercy. This, indeed, is also of the very essence of ignorance. For he who perceives Allah could not conceive himself to be secure or despairing.

This stage is followed by the various heresies connected with (the concepts of) the essence of Allah, His attributes and acts. Some of these are graver than others. The disparity among them is commensurate with people's varying degrees of ignorance, and with their holding on to the belief in Allah, His acts and revelations, His commands and prohibitions. The gradations of this are unlimited. They are divided into what one knows to be included within the mortal sins mentioned in the Qur'an; what is known not to be included; and what one is in doubt about. Seeking to dispel the doubt about this middle category is a hopeless aspiration.

The second level pertains to human beings, since on their survival and maintenance depend the continuity of life and attainment of perception of Allah. Consequently, murder, even though beneath (the gravity) of disbelief, is certainly of the mortal sins. For, while one strikes at the goal (of religion) itself, the other strikes at the means to the (fulfillment) of that goal. For life in the world is intended only for the sake of the hereafter and the attainment thereof by means of human perception of Allah. This mortal sin is followed by amputation of limbs and whatever leads to death, even beating, with some acts being graver than others.

The prohibition of adultery and homosexuality falls within this category because if all men were to be content only with males to fulfill their carnal desires, procreation would cease. Rejection of the existence is close to cutting off

existence. As for adultery, it does not negate the principle of existence but rather distorts the lines of kinship and nullifies inheritance, mutual aid and many of those matters without which life cannot be well ordered. How can good order be achieved together with the permission of adultery? Animal life is not well thriving so long as the male is not with his particular females, set apart from the other males. For this reason it is inconceivable for adultery to be permissible according to a religion whose aim is the improvement of life. Adultery must be on a level beneath murder as it does not threaten the continuity of human existence, nor does it prevent its principle. It only threatens the distinction of familial relationships, and stimulates factors that lead to strife. It (adultery) must be considered graver than homosexuality as the natural desires spur it on both sides, its frequency is greater, and with frequency its impact becomes more harmful.

The third level pertains to property, which is the life stuff of man. Men cannot control its acquisition chaotically, even through seizure, theft and the like. Rather it must be preserved, so that its continuity might insure the continuity of human beings. Nevertheless, property, when it is seized, can be regained, and if it has been disposed of, restitution is possible. The affair, then, cannot become as grave (as is the previous level). It is true that when its acquisition occurs in a manner that would make correction difficult, such (usurpation) should be considered a mortal sin. This can be in four ways. The first is hidden, which is theft. If it is not generally controlled: how can it be corrected. The second is consumption of an orphan's property. This too is covert. I refer to a guardian or custodian, entrusted with (the property), who has no possible opposition save the orphan who is a minor unaware of the matter. This must be considered grave. Different is the case of extortion which is overt, and that of breach of a normal trust where the consignor can oppose the action and seek justice for himself. The third is its alienation by false witness. The fourth is seizure of a trust and the like by willful perjury.

Indeed these methods are not open to correction and it is unimaginable that religions should differ at all as to interdicting them. Some (cases) are graver than others, but they all are beneath the second level which is concerned with life. These four are worthy of being assigned as mortal sins even though canon law does not invoke legal punishment in some cases. However, Divine threats in their regard are numerous, and in the affairs of this world their impact is evidently great.

As for usury it is only the consumption of another's property by mutual consent, along with the breach of a condition imposed by canon law. It is not unlikely that there should be a variance among the religions in a matter like this. If extortion, which is the taking. of another's property without his consent and without the law's permission, has not been deemed a mortal sin, then usury, done with the assent of the owner, albeit without legal sanction, should preferably not be considered a mortal sin. Even though the canon law rebukes usury, it has done so also with regard to the iniquity of extortion and the like, and to breach of trust, with the result that it merits consideration whether a Daniq's worth of embezzlement and extortion is mortal sin, yet this is an area of doubt, and the

trend of thought is against including such deeds under the heading of mortal sin. Rather, it is appropriate to limit mortal sin to that which is legally so indisputable that it be religiously obvious.

Thus, of what Abu Talib Al-Makki mentioned, only false charge, intoxication, witchcraft, flight in the battlefield (from the enemies) and undutifulness to parents remain.

As for drinking, inasmuch as it removes reason, it is appropriate that it be a mortal sin, as attested to by both the severity of the law and rational considerations. For indeed, the intellect is a gift just as life, nay, life is worthless without the (faculty of) reason. Depriving reason of its faculty is a mortal sin.

This does not follow, however, from a drop of wine. No doubt, if a man drank water containing a drop of wine, that would not constitute a mortal sin. It is merely drinking polluted water. The drop itself is an object of doubt. That the law lays down legal punishment for it (only) indicates how grave it views the matter of intoxication. For it is counted as a mortal sin under the law. It is beyond human ability to grasp all the subtleties of the divine law. If there is consensus that it is a mortal sin, this line must be pursued. If not, there is room for hesitation.

As for false charge, it involves only hurting (people's) honor, and this falls below the level of ruining property. Harming honour is serious, its most severe being false accusation regarding committing fornication. The canon law views this gravely. I think that the Companions used to count any (action) which called for legal punishment a mortal sin. From this viewpoint, it is not expiated by the five prayers, and this is what we mean by mortal sin'. But, inasmuch as it is possible that the (scriptural) laws would differ about this, while analogy alone does not point to the magnitude and gravity (of this false charge), nay, it would be possible for the Law to stipulate that one just witness, upon seeing a man committing adultery, may bear testimony, in which case the accused is flogged by virtue of this testimony. But, if his testimony is not accepted, then the other man's punishment is not evident, even if it is one of the actually occurring affairs in the category of needs. Then, this too is appended to the mortal sins for him who knows the rule of canon law. As for he who thinks that he must testify himself or that another may join him in support, it is not necessary that it be counted as a mortal sin for him.

As for witchcraft, if it contains disbelief, it is a mortal sin, otherwise, its gravity depends upon the damage which results from it, such as loss of life, sickness or the like.

As for flight in the battlefield and undutifulness to parents, this too should be, by virtue of analogy, subject to hesitation. Thus we conclude that since any accusation, except adultery, assaulting people, oppressing them by usurpation of their property, evicting them from their dwellings and villages and ousting them from their homelands, does not involve a mortal sin, for it has not been mentioned among the seventeen, the highest listing given, so that hesitation in this too is not unlikely. The Tradition, however, indicates its designation as mortal sin, and so it may be appended to such sin.

In conclusion, the matter reverts to the meaning we attached to mortal sin, i.e., that which the five prayers never expiate, according to the rule of canon law. That again is divided into what one knows will not, at all, be expiated; that for which people should atone; and that which is open to doubt. Of the last, some cases may be presumed to be solved positively or negatively, and others are so doubtful that only a text from the Book or (prophetic) tradition can resolve them. In the absence of such a text' there is no point in seeking resolution of the doubt.

You might argue: "This proves the impossibility of perceiving the definition of a mortal sin, and how can the Law deal with what cannot be defined?"

In reply to that, it should be known to you, then, that anything in connection with which there is no judgment in this world can be open to ambiguity. Yet it is this world that is the sphere of obligation. About mortal sin, as such, there is no rule in this world. Rather, anything necessitating legal punishment is known by its (distinctive) name, such as theft, adultery and the like. But the rule of mortal sin is merely that the five prayers do not atone for it. This is a matter relating to the hereafter, and ambiguity about it is appropriate in order that man be fearful and cautious, and should not venture, relying on the efficacy of the five prayers, into trivial sins. Thus, avoidance of mortal sins atones trivial ones, in accordance with the statement of Allah Almighty: "If you avoid the mortal sins that are forbidden you, we will acquit you of your evil deeds." (An-Nisa' 31)

﴿إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ﴾

But, avoidance of mortal sin atones for the trivial sin only when man abstains despite his ability and volition, like one who has power over a woman and could cohabit with her but restrains himself from intercourse and limits himself to gazing or touching. His internal struggle to abstain from sexual relation has greater effect in the illumination of his heart than his audacity in gazing has in the darkening of his heart. This is the meaning of his atonement. If, however, he was sexually impotent, or he abstained only because of disability, or refrained in fear of another superfluous matter, then such would, by no means, serve the purpose of atonement. Whoever, by nature, had no desire for wine, and even were it permitted to him he would not drink of it, his abstention would not atone for the auxiliary trivial sins like listening to the playing of musical instruments. Certainly, he who craves wine and listening to music, yet restrains himself with great effort from wine and rather settles for music, his internal struggle in abstention may erase from his heart the darkness which accrued to it through the sin of listening to music. All of these judgements pertain to the hereafter, and it is conceivable that some of them will remain in a state of uncertainty and doubt. Their particulars can be known only from a text. But no text nor comprehensive definition has yet been presented, and only varying versions have reached us.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "One prayer to the next and one Ramadan to the next is an atonement (for sins to be committed between them), except in three matters: polytheism, abandonment of *sunnah* and breach of contract." (Al-Hakim and Ahmad). He was

asked: "What is meant by abandoning sunnah?" He said: "to secede from the community." The breach of contract is that a man swears allegiance to (a ruler) and then goes out with sword against him. This and similar expressions do not indicate a total number, nor do they point to a general rule. Thus the matter certainly remains obscure.

You might argue: "Testimony *is* accepted only from him who avoids the mortal sins, and caution from trivial sins is not a requisite for its acceptance. This is according to the rules of this world." In reply to that, it should be known that we do not restrict the rejection of testimony to the mortal sins. Indisputably, one who listens to the playing of musical instruments, dresses in silk brocade, wears a golden ring, and drinks from gold and silver vessels, his testimony is not accepted, yet no one has concluded that these matters are mortal sins.

Ash-Shafi'i said: "If a Hanafite drank Nabidh, I should impose legal punishment but would not reject his testimony." By obligating legal punishment he made it a mortal sin, yet he did not reject the testimony. This shows that neither acceptance nor rejection of testimony depends upon either trivial or mortal sins. Rather, all sins damage integrity except those which man obviously cannot escape, such as slander, snooping, evil assumption, falsehood in some statements, listening to gossip, abandoning the enjoinment of good and forbidding the evil, eating doubtful food, abuse of a child and slave, beating them, in anger, more than due, deference to tyrannical rulers, friendship with profligates, and indolence in instruction of household and child in all their religious needs. It is inconceivable that the witness could avoid, more or less, these sins except by withdrawing and devoting himself exclusively to the affairs of the hereafter, and curbing himself for awhile to the extent that he would be able to stick to his path even after he has rejoined society. If only the word of such a man were to be accepted, then it would be so scarce that all litigation and testimony would prove untenable.

Dressing in silk, listening to music, playing backgammon, social intercourse with the drinking set at the time of a party, intimacy with alien women, and the like of these trivial sins are not of this kind. In accepting or rejecting testimony one must look into these ways, not into mortal or trivial sins.

Then again some of these trivial sins, because of which testimony is not rejected, surely may bring on the rejection of testimony if a man persists in them, e.g., habitual gossip and slander, keeping company and friendship with profligates. The trivial sin grows by persistence, just as the permissible but indifferent act, like playing chess, singing constantly, etc., may become, through persistence, a trivial sin.

That is enough to explicate the ruling on mortal and trivial sins

Explication Of How Higher And Lower States, In The Hereafter Are Distributed According To Good And Evil Deeds In This Life

It should be known to you that This life belongs to the material world of visibles while the hereafter to the transcendent dominion of invisibles. By 'this life' I refer to your state before death, and by the 'hereafter' to your condition

after death. For your (temporal) existence and afterlife are your attributes and states: that which is near is called 'this life' and that which follows later is called the hereafter. We speak now while being in this life about the next world. Because, we speak in this life, it being the sensible world, but our purpose is the explanation of the hereafter, which is the world beyond the senses, and it is inconceivable to describe the transcendent world within the sensible world except by adducing parables. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "And those parables, we set them forth for the people, but none understands them save those who know." (Al-Ankabut 43)

﴿ وَتِلْكَ ٱلْأَمْثَـٰلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْعَـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾

This is because the temporal world, compared to the transcendent world, is like slumber. That is meaning of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "men are asleep, and when they die they awaken." (This statement is attributed to Ali Ibn Abu Talib and not to the Prophet). That which will occur in the state of wakefulness becomes clear to you during sleep only through parables which are in need of interpretation. Likewise, that which will take place in the state of wakefulness in the hereafter cannot be explained in the slumber of this life except through a multitude of parables, by which I mean that we know from the science of dream interpretation. Of these similitudes three should suffice if you are sagacious.

A man came to Ibn Sirin and said: "In my dream I saw as if I had a seal in my hand with which I sealed men's mouths and women's pudenda." Ibn Sirin said: "You are a Mu'adhdhin (pronouncer of call to prayer) who pronounces the call to the prayers during Ramadan before the break of dawn." He said: "You have told the truth."

Another man came to him and said: "I saw myself pouring oil into olives." Ibn Sirin said: "If you have a female slave whom you bought, examine her case closely, for, indeed, she is your mother who was taken as a captive while you were an infant For the olives are the source of the oil, and now (in your dream) it is restored to the source." The man looked into the matter, and behold! the slave was his mother who had been taken captive while he was an infant.

A third man said to Ibn Sirin: "I saw myself adorning the necks of pegs with pearls." Ibn Sirin said: "You teach wisdom to these unfitting for it." It was really as he said.

Dream interpretation, from first to last, consists of parables that guides you to the way of setting forth parables. By a parable we mean the rendering of meaning in such a way that if one considers its meaning he will find it true, but if he looks at its form he will find it false. Thus the Mu'adhdhin , looking at the form of the seal and the imprinting of it upon the pudenda, would consider it false. Indeed, he did not seal with it at all. But, if he considered its meaning he would find it true since from it issued the spirit and sense of sealing, which is the prevention intended by sealing.

The prophets address humans only by use of parables, for they are obligated to speak to men according to their level of understanding. But men are as in sleep, and nothing is revealed to a sleeping except through parable. When they

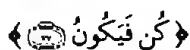
die they awake and realize that the parable is true. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The heart of the believer is between two of the fingers of (Allah) Most Merciful." This is of the parables that only those that know can understand. As for the ignorant, his level (of understanding) does not go beyond the literal sense of the parable, because of his ignorance of interpretation (Tafsir) which is called allegorical interpretation (Ta'wil) just as the interpretation of the parables seen in sleep is called 'dream interpretation' (Ta'bir). Thus he affirms to Allah a hand and a finger, exalted be Allah far above this view! Similar to this is the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Indeed, Allah created Adam in His image." The ignorant understands image as no more than color, form and shape. He attributes these to Allah. That is why some people stumbled in the matter of divine attributes, even in the divine speech, which they represent as voice and letter etc. It would take too long to discuss it.

Parables might be set forth concerning the hereafter, which the atheist, whose view rigidly sticks to the literal sense, renders contradictory and rejects. For example, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, Death will be brought in the form of a beautiful ram and killed." (both sheikhs on the authority of Abu Sa'id). The stupid heretic revolts, deems it a falsehood, and infers from it the falsity of the prophets, saying: " Glory be to Allah! Death is an accident and the ram is a body. How is an accident transformed into a body? Is this not absurd?" But Allah keeps the knowledge of His secrets out of reach of those fools, as He says: "None understands it save those that know." (Al-Ankabut 43)

﴿ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْعَٰلِمُونَ ﴾

The poor fool does not understand the significance when a man said: "I saw in my dream that a ram was brought and it was said that it was the plague which ravaged the village. Then, it was slaughtered." The interpreter said: "You have told the truth. It is as you have seen it. It indicates that the plague will cease and never recur, for the slaughtered was the source of desperation." Both are right: the interpreter in his explanation, and the dreamer in his vision. The truth here' goes back to the fact that the angel in charge of dreams is the one who informs spirits during sleep of that which is (written) on the Preserved Tablet, instructing the dreamer, by means of a parable which he set forth for him, of what is on the preserved tablet. That is because the sleeper is more apt to grasp the parable, and the parable is true and its meaning sound.

The prophets, also, when they address men in this life, which, compared to the hereafter, is as slumber, convey meanings to men's minds through similitudes, out of divine wisdom and kindness to men, facilitating the comprehension of that which they would fail to grasp without parables. The statement that death is brought in the form of a beautiful ram is a simile coined to convey to the mind that death brings on despair. The heart is predisposed to being influenced by similes and establish their meanings. The Qur'an expressed the utmost degree of power when it stated: ""Be", and it is" (Al-Baqarah 117)

﴿ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" expressed the alacrity of transformation when he said: "the heart of the believer is between two fingers of (Allah) Most Merciful." We have already indicated the sense of that in the Book of the Foundations of the Articles of Faith in the quarter of Acts of Worship.

Let us now return to the matter at hand. The point is that the indication of the distribution of high and low degrees for good and evil works is impossible except by giving similes. Let us, then, understand our simile as to its meaning, not its form. Just as men differ in (the attainment) of happiness or misery in this life, so are they divided in the hereafter into classes and their difference in the high and low degrees of happiness or misery is beyond calculation. The hereafter is not at all different in this respect. For the ruler of (both) the temporal and the transcendent worlds is one, and no associate has He. His order, which originates from His eternal will, is constant and unchangeable. While we are unable to enumerate the individual levels, we can at least calculate the (broader) categories.

In the hereafter, men are divided into four categories: the ruined, the chastised, the redeemed and the blessed. The analogy in this world is the following. A king captures a region. He kills some of the (natives): they are destroyed. He chastises some for awhile but does not kill them: they are chastised. He frees some: they are redeemed. He confers honours on some: they are successful. If the king is just he will divide them strictly on their merits. He will slay only those who deny the king's right, and resist him politically. He chastises only those who fell short in his service while acknowledging his dominion and lofty rank. He would free only those who, following recognition of his power, have not failed to the extent of deserving chastisement, nor have rendered service to the extent of deserving reward. He honours only those who have spent their lives to serve and support him.

It is proper that honours granted should vary in rank in accordance with the degrees of service; that the destruction of the ruined should be, either by beheading or infliction of an exemplary punishment, in accordance with their degree of opposition; that the severity, duration and type of punishment for the chastised should be in accordance with the degree of their failing. Each of these categories is subdivided into innumerable groups.

It is thus to be understood that, in the hereafter too, men are variously disposed. One will be destroyed, another chastised for awhile, one redeemed to reside in the abode of security, and another blessed. Moreover, the blessed are divided into those residing in the gardens of Eden, the gardens of sheltering retreat, or the gardens of Paradise. Among the chastised, also, there are those punished for a while, those tormented for one thousand to seven thousand years. These latter are the last to leave hellfire, as it has been reported in a certain tradition. The destroyed despairing of Allah's mercy are also of different categories. All these variations correspond to the differences in their acts of obedience and disobedience. Let us mention the way of distribution.

The first level is that of the ruined, by which we refer to those who despair of Allah's mercy. Do not be heedless of the meaning of our simile in which the slain was he who despaired of the king's pleasure and deference. This level is only for heretics, disdainers, those devoted solely to temporal existence, and those who deny Allah, His Messengers and scriptures. Yet, ultimate happiness lies in nearness to Allah and gazing at His countenance. Such is attained only through that perception which finds its expression in faith (in Allah) and acceptance (of His prophets). The heretics are those who deny, and the disbelievers are those who despair of Allah's eternal mercy. It is they who disbelieve in the Lord of the Universe and His appointed prophets. But upon that day they shall be veiled from their Lord most certainly. Yet whenever someone is veiled from his beloved, a bar is set between him and that which he desires, he certainly is seared as by hellfire by the fire of separation.

The Gnostics therefore say: "Our fear is not of hellfire, nor is our yearning for the houris of paradise. Nay, what we seek is only the meeting (with Allah), and what we flee from is the Veil. they Also said: "The one who worships Allah seeking compensation is ignoble. He worships Allah as if out of the quest for paradise or for fear of hellfire." The Gnostic, however, serves Him for His own sake, and seeks naught save Allah Himself. He desires neither a houri nor a Paradisaic fruit, and fears not hellfire. For the overwhelming fire of separation is likely to prove more painful than the fire which consumes the body. Indeed, the fire of separation is the fire of Allah kindled roaring over the hearts. The fire of Hell affects naught save the body, but, in relation to the affliction of the heart, the torment of the body is scorned. Therefore, it has been said (in the form of a poetic verse): "The hottest fire of Hell is cooler than The flame of passion in the lover's heart."

One should not ignore this (phenomenon) of the hereafter as there exists a visible parallel in the temporal world. It has been observed that a man possessed by the ecstasy of love runs over fire and on the roots of reeds that injure his feet, yet he feels it not due to the intensity of that which fills his heart. You can see, in combat, how fury overwhelms a man, so that he remains unaware of injuries sustained. That is because The rage is a fire filling his heart. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Rage is a portion of hellfire." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id). The burning of the heart is more potent that the burning of the body. As you can see, the stronger nullifies sensitivity to the lesser. Death by fire and sword is merely due to the separation of two components connected in a union feasible in bodies. But that which separates the heart from its beloved, to whom it is joined in a union more perfect than that (found) in bodies, is far more painful. (This is clear) if you are a man of heart and insight.

It is not unlikely that one who has no heart will not grasp the intensity of this pain and will regard it lightly in comparison to the pain of the body. If a youth were given the choice between the pain of doing without ball and mallet and the pain of missing the rank of a ruler, he would, by no means, be sensitive to the deprivation of power, nor would he reckon that as painful. He would exclaim: "(Running) with the mallet on the playing field is dearer to me than occupying a thousand royal thrones." Likewise, one who is dominated by

gluttony, if given the choice between pastry and sweets and a good action by which he would triumph over his enemies and delight his friends, surely would choose the pastry and sweets, as a result of the loss of that stimulus by which glory becomes desirable, and the presence of the faculty by which food becomes delightful.

This applies to one who has been dominated by bestial and predatory traits, in whom the angelic qualities have not appeared, those traits which tally with the delight exclusively in nearness to the Lord, and are aggrieved only by remoteness and concealment (from Him). Just as taste resides only in the tongue and hearing only in the ears, so this quality is only of the heart. And, just as one who is bereft of hearing and sight cannot appreciate the delight of melody nor the beauty of form and colour, so a man who has no heart cannot have this (spiritual) sensation. Not every man has a heart, otherwise, the statement of Allah: "Surely in that there is a reminder to him who possesses a heart" (Qaf 37)

﴿ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُۥ قَلْبٌ ﴾

It would not have been true. In this verse Allah qualified one unmindful of the Qur'an as one who is bereft of the heart.

I do not mean by 'heart' that which is encased by the ribs. Nay, I mean the conscience which is of the world of dominion, that piece of flesh which is of the world of creation, is its throne, the chest (cavity) its seat and the other limbs are its sphere and its realm. Both creation and dominion are the Lord's. Yet, that conscience about which Allah said: "Say, the spirit is of the command of my lord",(Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى ﴾

Is the commander and king. For between the world of creation and that of dominion there is a certain relation, the world of dominion commanding the world of creation. It is that spiritual substance which, if it is sound, brings soundness to the rest of the body. One who perceives it, knows himself and one who knows himself knows his Lord. Then man can have the first inkling of the spiritual wisdom implied in the statement of the Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” that "Allah created Adam in His image."

Allah views with compassion those who attribute to Him the literal meaning of His expression and those who stray in the method of (allegorical) interpretation. If His compassion for the former is greater than for the latter, it is because compassion comes in accordance with the measure of the error, their error being greater even though they share in the common misfortune of being deprived of the truth. For the truth is the bounty of Allah, which He gives to whom He will, and Allah is of bounty abounding. It is His wisdom: " He grants wisdom to whom He pleases; and he to whom wisdom is granted receives indeed a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding." (Al-Baqarah 269)

﴿ يُؤْتِي ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴾

Let us return to the matter 'at hand. We went to all that length and dwelt extensively on a matter which is higher than the study of practical religion which we pursue in this book. It has become evident, then, that the degree of destruction is visited only on the ignorant deniers. As the evidence of this from Allah's book and *sunnah* of His Messenger is too extensive, we have not cited it.

The second level is that of the chastised. On it are those who are endowed with the basic faith but have failed in corresponding fidelity. Indeed, the beginning of faith is monotheism *(Tawhid),* that is, that one serves only Allah. But a person who pursues his own whim, takes his whim to be Allah, and consequently pays lip-service to being monotheist and not so in fact. However, the meaning of the profession, 'there is none worthy of worship save Allah ', is the same as the Qur'an states: "Say: "Allah". then leave them alone, playing their game of plunging." (Al-An'am 91)

﴿ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِى خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴾

That means: abandon completely everything save Allah. The significance of the statement: "Those who have said 'our lord is Allah', then have gone straight... (Fussilat 30; Al-Ahqaf 13)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ ﴾ ، ﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ ﴾

The straight path, following of which is the only means to complete monotheism, is, like the bridge (over Hell) in the description of the hereafter, thinner than a hair and sharper than (the blade) of a sword. No man can escape deviation from it, even in an easy matter, as he is yet not free of following his whim, even if it be in a trifling. That detracts from the completeness of monotheism according to the (degree) of deviation from the straight path. Such certainly necessitates a defect in the degree of nearness to Allah. With each (such) defect, two fires attend: the fire of separation resulting from that elusive fullness of faith, and the fire of hell as described in the Qur'an.

Everyone who deviates from the straight path is punished twice in two respects. The severity or leniency, however, and the varying duration of that punishment is decided by two factors: the intensity of his faith and the degree of his pursuit of whim. Since man, in most cases, is not devoid of failing in one of the two respects, Allah said: "Not one of you there is, but he shall go down to it: that for your lord is a thing decreed, determined. Then we shall deliver those that were god-fearing: and the evil doers we shall leave there, hobbling on their knees." (Maryam 71:72)

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ۝ ثُمَّ نُنَجِّى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟ وَّنَذَرُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴾

The pious among the righteous predecessors said: "Our fear is caused by our being sure that we are destined for the fire, and we have doubts about salvation." When Al-Hassan reported the tradition of the one who leaves hellfire after a thousand years crying: " O Compassionate One! O Benefactor!", Al-Hassan said: "Would that I be that man!"

It should be known to you that some traditions indicate that the last to leave hellfire will do so after seven thousand years, and that the duration differs between a moment and seven thousand years, so that some pass over hellfire like a fleeting bolt of lightning without any sojourn. Between the single moment and the seven thousand years there are varying degrees of duration: A day, a week, a month, and so forth. There is also a diversity in the intensity with the maximum limitless, and the minimum an accounting, just as the king who sometimes punishes, by rebuke, those who have fallen short in their works, then grants pardon; sometimes by flogging and at other times he inflicts a different sort punishment. A third difference beyond duration and intensity, pertains to chastisement; that being variety of type. For one is punished by mere confiscation of his property; another by loss of his property and the slaying of his children and seizure of his women, chastisement of his kinsfolk, flogging, amputation of tongue, hand, nose, ear and so forth. Such variations exist also in the chastisement of the hereafter. These are indicated in the trenchant propositions of the law (of Islam).

These are in accordance with the strength or weakness of faith and the greater or lesser quantity of good and evil deeds. The intensity of chastisement is according to the intensity and frequency of the evil deeds, while its quantity is in proportion to the quantity of evil, and The variety of type to the variety of deeds. This has been disclosed to those who possess hearts, through Qur'an statements, by virtue of illumination of faith. This is the meaning of the statement: "Your Lord wrongs not His servants even in the least." (Fussilat 46)

﴿ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾

And: "And that man has naught save as he has labored." (An-Najm 39)

﴿ وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ ﴾

And: "Who so has done an atom's weight of good shall see it; and who so has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it." (Az-Zalzalah 7:8)

﴿ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

There are other such statements in the Book and Hadith as to reward and punishment being recompense for man's acts, all this injustice without iniquity. The trend toward pardon and mercy is preponderant as related by our Prophet "peace be upon him" from Allah as saying: "My mercy outweighs My wrath." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah). Allah Almighty said: "And if it be a good deed he will double it, and give from himself a mighty wage." (An-Nisa' 40)

﴿ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

Thus these general points, therefore, pertaining to the relation of high ranks and low degrees to good and evil works, are known through the trenchant statements of revelation and the illumination of gnosis. As for the particulars, they can be known only as (probable) opinion relying on the literal sense of the traditions and the type of intuition drawing upon the lights of contemplative scrutiny.

We assert, then, that anyone who absorbs the principle of faith, avoids all major sins and fulfills all religious obligations, i.e. the five pillars, with only sporadic minor transgressions, his punishment will, it seems, be merely a reprimand. When he is brought to account, his good works outweigh his evil ones, according to traditions that the five prayers, Friday prayer, and the fasting of Ramadan atone for that which (is committed) between them. Also, according to the Qur'an text, avoidance of major sin plots out minor ones. The minimum of atonement is that the punishment be averted though the accounting was not. Anyone in this position, with his scales heavy in the balance (of deeds), shall, after the favourable balance is evident and the accounting disposed, inherit a pleasing life. How excellent is his joining the Companions of the Right Hand or the near-stationed, and his entering the gardens of Eden or the Supreme Paradise.

The same applies to the classes of faith. For faith is of two types: imitative, as is the faith of the laymen who believe in what they are told and persist therein; and the revelatory faith which is achieved through the enlarging of the breast by divine illumination until all reality is exposed as it is. It then becomes clear that everything originates and ends in Allah for naught is real save Allah, His attributes and works. It is the people of this class that are the near-stationed ones who abide in the Supreme Paradise. They enjoy the utmost degree of closeness to the heavenly host. They too, however, are of various categories. Some are more advanced, others less, the disparity dependent upon the differences in their knowledge of Allah. The Gnostics' degrees of gnosis are innumerable inasmuch as fully fathoming Allah's glorious essence is impossible. The sea of gnosis has no coast nor bottom and, therefore, men dive in it according to their strength and according to what they have been granted by Allah throughout the ages. The stations on the road to Allah are endless, and innumerable are the levels of those who travel on Allah's path.

One who believes by imitation is of the Companions of the Right Hand but on a level lower than the near-stationed. The Companions of the Right Hand are further subdivided. The level of the highest among them approaches the lowest level of the near-stationed. This is the position of one who avoided all major sins and performed all religious obligations, i.e. the five pillars: the verbal utterance of the profession of faith, prayer, alms, fast and pilgrimage. One who perpetrated one or more major sins or neglected some of Islam's pillars, if he truly repents before his time came due, joins those who sinned not. For he who repents is as one who has never sinned, like a washed garment which is as one which was never soiled.

If he died before repentance, it is a risky matter, for he may die while persisting (in sin) and this may be the cause of wavering in his faith, and he may be assigned to a bad end. This is especially so when his faith was imitative. For imitation, though resolute, is apt to disintegrate at the least doubt or distortion. The insightful Gnostic is less likely to be afraid for a bad end. Both of them, if they died in faith, would be chastised, except that Allah may forgo, with chastisement beyond rebuke at the accounting. The duration of the punishment is commensurate with the duration of persistence in sin; its intensity with the

ignominy of the major sins; the variety of type with the variety of evil works. At the termination of the period of punishment the conformists will abide in the levels of the Companions of the Right Hand while the Gnostics of insight will abide in the highest *heights*.

It is narrated : "The last to leave hellfire will be given ten times the like of this whole world ." (both sheikhs on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud). Do not imagine that the intent is the calculation of the physical area, as one parasang compares to two parasangs or as ten compares to twenty. This would be ignorance of the way parables are coined. Rather, it is like the saying: "One took from him a camel and gave him ten like it" or, "the camel was worth ten dinars but someone gave him a hundred."

If one understands the simile only in terms of weight, surely then, the hundred dinars, if placed on one balance of a scale, would not register one-hundredths the weight of the camel on the other balance. Nay, it is a comparison of the meanings of bodies and spirits not of their individual existences. The camel is not wanted for its weight, length, breadth or area, but for its monetary worth. Its spirit is its monetary worth, and its body is its flesh and blood. One hundred dinars are equal to its tenfold on the spiritual balance, not on the bodily balance. This can be seen as true by anyone who knows the concept of monetary worth of gold and silver.

If one gave him, however, a jewel whose weight was a Mithqal though whose value a hundred dinars, and said: "I gave him ten times the like of it", he would be right. Only jewelers, however, would grasp his veracity. For the jewelry's spirit is not comprehended by mere eyesight but by a different sense beyond the eye. Therefore, a youth, especially a villager or Bedouin, would deny the statement saying: "This jewel is but a stone weighing a Mithqal"; the camel weighs a million Mithqals; hence the man lied when he said: "I gave him tenfold thereof." In truth, however, it is the youth who is wrong but there is no way to prove it to him, until he be left to mature and become refined, or until he attain in his heart the illumination with which he may grasp the inner worth of gems and other valuables. Then only would the truth be revealed to him.

The Gnostic is unable to make the conformist, lagging behind, understand how right is the Prophet "peace be upon him" in this comparison, as the Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” says, according to traditions: "Paradise is in the heavens." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah). The heavens are of this world. How can this world hold ten times the like of it? This incapacity is like that of the adult who is unable to make the boy grasp the above-mentioned comparison. The same is true of explaining the matter to the Bedouin.

Just as one may pity the jeweler when he attempts to enlighten the Bedouin and villager concerning the parable, so the Gnostic may be pitied when he attempts to enlighten the dull-witted. It is for this reason that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Have mercy on three: a learned man among the ignorant; the rich man who became poor and the mighty man who was humbled ." *(Ibn Hibban on the authority of Anas; and also on the authority of Ibn Abbas with a slight variation of*

wording). For this reason the prophets are pitied from among the people. Their tribulations, because of the people's lack of understanding, are a trial and test for them from Allah. Such tribulation is assigned to them, by eternal preordained decree. This is the meaning of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Tribulation is assigned to the prophets, then the saints, and then others rank by rank." (At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas).

Do not surmise that the tribulation is like that of Job, an affliction of the body. Indeed, Noah's trial was also great. He suffered from people who the more he called them to turn to Allah, the more they fled. Therefore, when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was troubled by the speech of some he said: "God had mercy on my brother Moses. Indeed, he was troubled by more than this, yet he endured." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud). Thus, the prophets are not free of being afflicted by the unbelievers. Nor are the saints and the learned free of being afflicted by the ignorant. Therefore, the saints are seldom free of types of harm and tribulation: by expulsion from the land, or their being denounced before the authorities, or by accusation of their unbelief and heresy. It is inevitable that the men of gnosis be viewed as unbelievers by the ignorant just as that he who substitutes a small gem for the large camel should be viewed, by the ignorant, as a squanderer and loser.

When you are aware of these points, trust the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The last to leave hellfire will be given ten times the like of this world." Beware lest you limit your belief to that which is perceived through the sense alone, and become a two-legged ass. For the ass shares with you the five senses; you, however, differ from the ass in a divine conscience which has been offered to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry (the trust) and were afraid of it. Yet, understanding of that which is beyond the sensible world occurs only within the scope of that conscience which distinguishes you from the ass and the other animals. He who overlooks that, disregards and neglects it, and is content with the bestial level, does not transcend the (level) of sensual perceptions, is the one who destroys himself by wrecking his soul, forgetting it by ignoring it. "Be not as those who forgot Allah, and so he caused them to forget their souls." Anyone who knows no more than what is grasped through the five senses has forgotten Allah, inasmuch as His not being encompassed, in this world, through the senses. But anyone who has forgotten Allah, is certainly made to forget his own soul, and is lowered to the animal level, and abandons the ascent to the higher horizon. He betrays the trust which Allah placed with him and bestowed upon him, is ungrateful of His blessings and is risking His rancor, nay his state is worse than that of the beast. For, the beast is redeemed by death.

But man has a trust which shall, certainly, be returned to its consignor. He is the source and end of the consignment. The trust is like the radiant sun, yet, it falls into this evanescent mold and sets in it. At the destruction of this mold this sun will rise from its setting place and return to its creator, either in eclipsing darkness or with brilliant radiance. The brilliant and radiant are not barred from

the divine Presence. The darkened will also return to the Presence for Allah is the source and end of all; only that (the darkened soul) turns its head from the highest heights to the lowest depths. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "If you could see the guilty handing their heads before their lord." (As-Sajdah 12)

﴿ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا۟ رُءُوسِهِمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ﴾

It is clear, then, that they are, before their Lord, in confusion, with their faces turned back and their heads lowered. Such is the divine rule for all to whom He has denied success and whom He has not guided on His path. We seek refuge with Allah from error and from descent to the station of the ignorant.

Such is the fate of him who leaves hellfire and is given ten times or more the like of this world. But only a (true) monotheist will leave hellfire. By monotheism I do not refer to the verbal profession: 'there is none worthy of worship but Allah'. The tongue is of the temporal world and avails only in the temporal world. (Such verbal profession) removes the sword from man's neck and repels the hands of plunderers from his wealth. Security of limb and property extends only along the duration of life. But as limb and property do not remain, verbalization avails not. On the contrary, sincerity in monotheism avails, and its perfection is that man sees all things as coming only from Allah. Its sign is that he does not become angry at any creature in what befalls him, inasmuch as he sees not the means but the Prime Cause, as will be shown in the Book of Reliance on Allah. This monotheism is variegated. There are those whose monotheism is like mountains; others like only the weight of an ounce; and others like the weight of a mustard seed or grain. He who has in his heart a dinar's weight of faith, will be the first to leave hellfire. It is said in a tradition: "Get out of hellfire those in whose heart there is a dinar's weight of faith." The last to leave is he in whose heart there is only a grain of faith. The amount of degrees between the dinar's weight and the grain determines the order of exit from hellfire in between the two extremes. The comparison between the ounce and the grain is, in terms of simile, as we have mentioned in the comparison between property assets and species.

For the most part, what leads monotheists into hellfire is injustices toward men, since the account of men is that which will not be neglected. As for the remainder of evil deeds, they may be quickly pardoned and atoned. As a tradition puts it: "Man is brought before Allah. The man has good deeds (to his credit) the likes of mountains; if they be admitted he is of the people of Paradise. Then the examiners of interpersonal injustices rise: he may have abused someone's dignity, misappropriated someone's property, assaulted someone. These deeds are subtracted from his good deeds until none remain. Then the angels declare: ' O Lord, this man's good deeds are gone and many claims against him remain.' Allah proclaims: 'Heap their grievances upon his account, and make out his ticket to hellfire.'" Just as he is destroyed by the evil done to another, by way of retribution, so the wronged one is saved by the good deed of the evildoer who committed the injustice against him. For, it is transferred to him in exchange for the wrong he suffered at the other's hand.

It is narrated from Ibn Al-Jalla' that one of his brethren slandered him, then, requested his forgiveness. He said: "I cannot. My ledger has no good in it better than this. How can I erase it?" He and others said: "My brethren's transgressions are of my good deeds with which I intend to adorn my ledger."

It is this that we desired to mention of the variation of man's degrees of happiness and misery in the hereafter.

All this is judgement of external causes, like the decision of the physician about a particular patient that he will certainly die and no treatment will avail, and about another patient that his disease is slight and his cure easy. Indeed, that notion is correct in most instances. Yet, sometimes, unexpected by the physician, the soul's soundness may return to man close to death. Sometimes, however, the end comes unexpectedly to one who suffers from a light disease. These are Allah's mysteries, concealed in the living and in the obscurity of causes determined with a certain measure of the Prime Cause, for it is not given to human power to fathom them.

Likewise, salvation and bliss in the hereafter have secret causes beyond the capacity of human comprehension. That concealed cause leading to redemption is called pardon and favour, and that leading to destruction is called wrath and vengeance. Behind this mystery is the eternal divine volition which no creature can comprehend. Thus we must admit the pardon of the rebellious, even if his apparent evil is great, and the wrath upon the obedient, even if his apparent acts of obedience are many.

Indeed, we rely on piety, which is in the heart and it (the heart) is too obscure to be grasped by its possessor, the more so by another. It has already, however, been revealed to the masters of hearts that forgiveness comes to man only through a secret reason which accounts for it. Wrath also comes only because of a hidden cause which draws man away from Allah. If not for that, pardon and wrath would not be recompense for acts and qualities. Were it not recompense it would be unjust, and, if it were unjust, the verses: "Your lord wrongs not his servants" (Fussilat 46)

﴿ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴾

And: "Surely Allah shall not wrong so much as an atom's weight " (An-Nisa' 40)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ﴾

Would not be correct. Yet all of this is true: And that a man shall have to his account only as he has labored, and that his labouring shall surely be seen. Every soul shall be pledged for what it has earned. When they swerved, Allah caused their hearts to swerve and, when they change what is in themselves, Allah changes that which is in them. This confirms the significance of the statement of Allah: "Allah changes not what is in a people until they change what is in themselves." (Ar-Ra'd 11)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا۟ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ﴾

All this has been revealed to possessors of heart in a manner clearer than

visible evidence, inasmuch as eyesight can err, as when, at times, it perceives a distant object as near and a large one as small. But the evidence of the heart cannot err. The point is the opening of the eyesight of the heart and not to imagine falsity in the heart after this development. This is referred to in the statement of Allah: "The heart lies not of what he saw." (An-Najm 11)

﴿ مَا كَذَبَ ٱلْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰٓ ﴾

The third level is that of the saved. By salvation I mean security only, without felicity or bliss. They are people who have neither rendered service to be rewarded, nor have they failed (so as) to deserve punishment. It seems that this is the state of the insane, the youngsters of the unbelievers, the feeble-minded and those whom the call to Allah has not reached due to geographical isolation. They live in ignorance without perception. Their portion is neither knowledge nor unbelief, neither obedience nor rebellion. There is no means that can bring them close to Allah nor any offence which can turn them away from Allah. They are not of the people of paradise nor of the people of hellfire. Rather, they are stationed midway between the two. The revelation calls this *A'raf* (the Heights) The existence of some people in this stage is known with certainty from Qur'an verses, traditions and the lights of various considerations. Essentially, the judgement, for example, that the youth are in this category, is presumed and not known with certainty. Learning about it truly belongs to the sphere of prophecy, and it is unlikely that (men in) the grade of the saints and the scholars would rise to it.

The traditions as regards the youth are also contradictory. When one of the youths died, A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" said: "A bird from among the birds of Paradise." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" denied this saying: "How do you know?" (Muslim). Ambiguity and obscurity, therefore, prevail about this station.

The fourth level is that of the blessed. They are the Gnostics, as distinct from the mere imitators. They are the successful, and their station is close (to Allah). The imitator, even if he attains, on the whole, a station in Paradise, is of the Companions of the Right Hand, but these are the near-stationed, and what they experience is beyond description. The extent of possible explanation is what is described in the Qur'an. There can be no explanation beyond Allah's. That which cannot be expressed in this world is summed up in the Holy statement: "No soul knows what comfort is laid up for them secretly" (As-Sajdah 17)

﴿ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِىَ لَهُم ﴾

And also in the Prophetic tradition: "I have prepared for my righteous servants that which no eye has seen, which no ear has heard of, and which has not occurred to the human mind." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

The desire of the Gnostics is that state which could not conceivably have occurred to the human mind in this world. As for the houris, palaces, fruits, milk, honey, wine, and jewelry of Paradise, the Gnostics do not covet of them.

Moreover, if these were given to them, they would not be content. They seek only the ecstasy of gazing at Allah's countenance. This is the utmost of felicities and the ultimate delight. That is why, when Rabi'ah Al-Adawiyyah was asked: "What do you long for in Paradise?", she answered: "first the Neighbour and then the House." For these are people whose preoccupation with the love of the Master deflects them from taking interest in the house and its embellishment, indeed in anything other than He, even in themselves.

They are like the lover who is blindly devoted to his Beloved, whose mind is riveted to gazing at His countenance and thinking of Him. He is in the state of immersion, he is neglectful of himself, not aware of what affects his body. This state is called the self-annihilation. That means that he becomes immersed in another, and all his concerns become one concern, namely his Beloved. There remains no room in him for anything but his beloved until he pays no attention to either himself or others. This is the state through which, in the hereafter, one attains such delight as inconceivable in this world, in anyone's mind, as it cannot be imagined that one deaf and blind would form the notion of colour and melody unless the bar was lifted from (the impairment of) his faculties of hearing and sight. At that point he might understand his condition and know, assuredly, that earlier it was impossible for him to have formed such notions. This life is a veil to realization, and with its removal the hidden is revealed. At that point, the flavour of the good life is perceived. "Surely the last abode is life, did they but know." (Al-Ankabut 24)

﴿ وَإِنَّ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ ٱلْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

This suffices for explication of the distribution of degrees (in the hereafter) according to good deeds. May Allah, in His benevolence, grant success.

Explication Of How Minor Sins Are Increased

It should be known that there are circumstances by which minor sins are magnified. Among them are persistence and assiduity. That is why they say: "A sin persisted in cannot be minor, and a sin followed by the quest for forgiveness cannot be major." A major sin can go by and, if it can be imagined that it is not followed by the like, then pardon for such is more likely than for a minor sin in which man persists. A model for this is drops of water falling continuously upon a stone until they wear it away. The same amount of water, poured onto the stone all at once, would not produce a like effect. That is why the Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” said: "the best of deeds is that to be done regularly no matter how little it might be." (both sheikhs on the authority of A'ishah).

Matters are clarified through their opposites. If the useful work is the constant, even if it be minor, then the intermittent though numerous works are of little advantage in the illumination and purification of the heart. Likewise, a few evil deeds, if they persist, have great influence in corrupting the heart. Yet, it is hardly imaginable that man storms for the major sin suddenly without antecedents and accessories from the category of minor sins. Rarely does the adulterer fornicate without enticement and plotting. Rarely, also, does one kill

abruptly without previous rancor and enmity. Thus every major sin involves previous and dependent minor ones. If we could imagine a major sin independent and sudden, without recurrence, perhaps pardon of it would be more likely than of a minor sin in which a man persists throughout his life.

Another (cause of augmenting the minor sin to be major) is to consider sin minute. Indeed, whenever man himself deems the sin as major, it becomes, in Allah's view, minor, because the apprehension of its magnitude stems from the heart's aversion to it and loathing of it. This aversion to it restrains the intensity of its influence upon the heart. On the contrary, considering a sin insignificant stems from habitude which makes, for an intense influence on the heart. The heart must be illumined through acts of obedience, and its blackening through evil deeds must be avoided. It, therefore, will not be censured for what befalls it inadvertently. Indeed, the heart is not impressed by what occurs inadvertently, according to a certain tradition: "The believer considers his sin (as huge as) a mountain, suspended above him, and fears it may fall upon him; whilst the hypocrite considers his sin (as trivial as) a fly which passed by his nose, and is swatted away." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Al-Harith Ibn Suwaid from Ibn Mas'ud). Somebody said that the sin which is not forgiven is man's saying: "Were all my sins to be like this."

The sin waxes in the heart of the believer because of his awareness of Allah's majesty, and when he contemplates the greatness of Him against whom he rebelled, he sees a minor sin as major. Allah has revealed to one of His prophets: "Look not at the insignificance of the gift but rather at the greatness of the giver; look not at the smallness of the offense, but rather at the majesty of Him whom you confront with it." In this sense a Gnostic has said: "There is no minor sin, but every offense is major."

Likewise, one of the Companions “Allah be pleased with them” said to Tabi'is: "Surely you do things which, though in your eyes they are finer than a hair, we, in the time of the Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him”, would reckon among the major sins." Since the Companions' perception of Allah's majesty was more sterling, they considered the minor sins, with regard to Allah's majesty, as major sins. For the same reason what is a minor sin in the case of an ignorant, becomes a major sin in the case of a learned man. Matters which are disregarded in the case of a common person, are not so disregarded in the case of an enlightened one, for sin and offense grow in proportion to the perception of the transgressor.

Another cause of augmenting the minor sin is to be delightful in the minor sin, take pride in it, consider its realization as pleasure, and disregard of its being the cause of misery. The more the sweetness of the minor sin overcomes a man, the more a minor sin becomes major, and its impact in blackening the heart is growing. There are sinners who pride themselves on their sins and boast of them, because of the intensity of their joy at having yielded to them. one might say: "Have you not seen how I rent his dignity?" A disputant might say: "Have you now seen how I exposed him, how I brought out his shortcomings to the point of shame, how I scorned him and how I duped him?" A trader might say: "Have

you not seen how I sold him the spurious, how I deceived him, how I cheated him of his wealth and how I made a fool of him?" By such deeds, minor sins are magnified. But sins are destructive. When man is led to them, and Satan has succeeded in inducing him to act that way, then he should be in trouble and incurs regret on him by the triumph of the Enemy over him and his own remoteness from Allah Almighty. If a sick person rejoices in the destruction of the bottle containing his medication, just to escape the bitterness of drinking it, his cure is not expected.

A further cause of increasing a minor sin is that man disdains Allah's protection of him, His forbearance, and the respite He grants to him. Man does not grasp that he is given respite out of intense dislike, so that the offense might increase. He thinks that his ability to sin is a sign of Allah's concern for him. This is because of his feeling secure from Allah's planning, and his ignorance of the pitfalls of delusion about Allah. In confirmation of that He says: "And they say within themselves: "Why does Allah not chastise us for what we say?" sufficient for them shall be Hell, at which they shall be roasted - a wretched lot." (Al-Mujadilah 8)

﴿ حَسْبُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴾

Another cause is that he commits a sin and exposes it by mentioning it after committing it, or that he commits it in another's presence. Indeed, such is an offense against the protection Allah lowers upon him and an incitement of the craving for evil in him whom he tells of his sin or whom he makes witness his action. Two offenses join into his offense to harden it. If encouraging another person to commit that sin, inducing him and involving him, are added, it goes into a fourth crime, and it becomes a monstrous affair.

It is narrated in a tradition: "All men are excused except the declarers. One of them spends the night in sin, and Allah conceals it, yet he arises and removes divine concealment, and speaks of his sin." (both sheikhs on the authority of Abu Hurairah). This is because one of Allah's attributes and favours is that he reveals the good deed, conceals the unsightly and does not rip the protective veil. But man's exposure (of sin) is a repudiation of this grace. Somebody said: "Do not sin, but if you cannot avoid sin, awaken not such a desire in another, for then you will have sinned twice." That is the reason why Allah Almighty states: " The Hypocrites, men and women, (have an understanding) with each other: they enjoin evil, and forbid what is just, and are close with their hands." (At-Tawbah 67)

﴿ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتُ بَعْضُهُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ ۚ ﴾

It is narrated that somebody said: "The gravest violation of a man's reputation is to assist him in committing a sin, and then make him regard it slight."

Another cause of magnifying a sin is the case in which the sinner is a learned having followers. If his sin is displayed, it increases, e.g., the scholar's putting on silk, riding golden carriages, taking doubtful money from rulers,

frequenting the company of rulers, encouraging them by abstention to disapprove (of their evil), reckless slandering, intemperance in controversy, by way of scorning, and occupying himself with such learning as leads only to glory, like the art of controversy and argumentation. For these are sins in which the learned will have a following. He dies but his evil remains spreading in the world indefinitely. Blessed is he whose sins die with him. According to a particular tradition: "He who enacts an evil practice bears its burden and the burden of anybody practicing it, reducing nothing of theirs at all." (Muslim on the authority of Jarir Ibn Abdullah). Allah Almighty says: "And We write down what they have forwarded and what they have left behind." (Ya Sin 12)

﴿ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ ﴾

What "is left behind" refers to those acts which continue after the expiration of the deed and the perpetrator.

Ibn 'Abbas "Allah be pleased with both" said: "Woe to the scholar from his followers; he slips but goes right yet people carry the error far away." Somebody said: "The error of the learned is like a ship, it sinks and its passengers drown." In the Israelite tales "There was a scholar who misguided people into unlawful innovation, then was overtaken by repentance and acted toward correction over a lifetime. Allah then revealed to their prophet: "Say to him: 'If your sin were only in that which is between Me and you, I would surely forgive it. However, what about those of My servants you have misled and plunged into hellfire?'"

Thus it becomes clear that the position of the learned is grave. They have two duties: first, abandonment of sin, and second, concealment of it. Just as their responsibility for sins is compounded, so is their recompense for good deeds emulated by their following. If the learned abandons pursuit of affectation and the affection for the mundane world, is satisfied with little thereof, as well as with little food and apparel against the elements, and is followed in this by leading scholars and laymen, he will enjoy the likes of their reward. If, however, he leans toward affectation, they consequently would lean to imitate him. they would be able to attain success only in the service of rulers and the gathering of scraps from unlawful wealth. For all this he will be responsible. Thus the behaviour of the scholars is compounded manifold, be it in merit or demerit, in gain or less.

This is sufficient for the details of the sins from which repentance is effective.

THIRD PILLAR

ON PERFECTION, REQUISITES AND PERMANENCE OF REPENTANCE

We have already mentioned that repentance consists of regret which leads to determination and resolution. This regret is itself caused by knowledge that the offenses are a barrier between man and his Beloved. Each of these, knowledge, regret and determination, has permanence and perfection. Its perfection has a sign, and its permanence has requisites, all to be clarified.

As for knowledge, it is to know the cause of repentance; its strengthening and its perfection by factors such as the company of the virtuous, attendance of the gatherings of celebration (of Allah), questioning about the fatal impact of

transgressions and about the punishment they may bring on in this world. But cleaving to a sheikh is more useful than all this; indeed it is the efficacious remedy. It will be discussed later in more detail.

As for regret, it is the heartache, when man discerns that the Beloved has been lost. It is marked by long grief and sorrow, tears flowing and much weeping. When one becomes aware of torment afflicting his child or one of his dear ones, his grief and weeping are protracted. And, who is dearer to a person than himself, what punishment is severer than hellfire, what is more indicative of the descent of punishment than sins, and what announcer is more reliable than Allah and His Messenger?

If a man is told by a physician that his child would not recover from his illness and would die thereof, surely his grief would be aroused. Yet, his child is not dearer than himself, nor is the physician more knowledgeable or more reliable than Allah and His Messenger, nor is death more severe than hellfire, nor is sickness more indicative of death than sins are of Allah's wrath and the risk of hellfire. The stronger the anguish of regret is, the more the expiation of sin through it is expected. The sign of the sincerity of regret is the mellowness of the heart and the profusion of tears.

It is said in a particular tradition: "Sit with the contrite, for their hearts are the most mellow." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya from the saying of Abdullah Ibn Abu Awn). A sign thereof is that instead of the sweetness of those sins, their bitterness seizes man's heart, and inclination turns- into loathing, desire into aversion. It is stated in the Israelite tales that Allah Almighty said to one of His prophets who had asked Him to accept the repentance of a certain man after he had strived in vain for years in worship: "By My power and majesty, if the inhabitants of heaven and earth interceded, I would still not accept his repentance, for the sweetness of that sin, from which he repents, yet lurks in his heart."

You may argue: "Sins by nature are agreeable acts. How, then, can one find bitterness in them?" in reply to that, let me say that one who eats honey containing poison, and does not discover it by taste, and relishes it, but afterwards falls ill, his illness and its pain progress, his hair falls out and his limbs are left paralyzed, should honey containing a like substance, be set before him, even if he is in an extreme state of hunger and urge for sweetness, would his soul shun such honey or not? If you answer in the negative, such answer would be a denial of the evident and of experience.

Rather, it is possible that even uncontaminated honey would be shunned because of its resemblance to the other. That is how the repentant may have the sensation of the bitterness of sin. This is brought on by his knowledge that the taste of every sin may be the taste of honey, but its effect is that of poison. Repentance is not sincere or true without such belief. As such belief is rare, repentance and repentants are rare. You see only such as turn away from Allah, think lightly of sins, and persist in them. This is a requisite for the perfection of regret, and must be constant unto death.

Man must find such bitterness in all sins, even if he has never committed them before, just as one who consumed poison contained in honey feels aversion

to fresh water as soon as he learns that it contains a similar poison, since the harm was not from the honey but rather from what it contained. Likewise, the damage that afflicts the repentant from his theft or fornication does not stem from the nature of the act itself but rather from its being a transgression and violation of Allah's command. This applies to every sin.

As for the resolution which emerges therefrom, it is the will to correction and it has a connection with the present, the past and the future. As far as the present is concerned, it entails renouncing anything prohibited which he practices, and the fulfillment of every obligation which faces him in the present. As far as the past is concerned, it is the correction of what has preceded. As for the future, it is the continued obedience and permanent renunciation of sin unto death.

The requisite of the sincerity of repentance, as far as the past is concerned, is that man should turn his thought back to the first day when he came of age or attained the age of puberty, and scrutinize his past life, year by year, month by month, day by day and moment by moment. He should review, in what acts of obedience he was negligent and to which sins he yielded.

If he missed a prayer or performed it while wearing an impure garment or not with the proper intent because he was unaware that the intent is a requisite of prayer, he should perform it in full. If he has doubts as to the number of prayers missed, computing from the period of his attaining maturity, subtracting the number of prayers which he feels sure he had performed, he should perform the remainder. He may use common sense, and he will attain the right figure by way of inquiry and careful reckoning.

As for fasting, if he neglected it during a journey, or if he broke the fast intentionally or forgot the proper intention at night and did not make it up, he should, after most careful computation, busy himself with making it up.

As for alms, he should compute his total wealth and the number of years that elapsed since he acquired it, and not from the time of his attaining maturity, for alms are due even on the property of the child. He then discharges that which he feels he most likely owes. Further, if he discharged it in a manner inconsistent with his rite, as not having disbursed to all the eight categories or discharged an alternate while he is of the Shafi'i school, he should execute all that; otherwise it is not fully satisfactory. The computation of alms and the knowledge of this matter is protracted, and requires lucid consideration: He may have to consult the jurists on how to settle the matter.

As for pilgrimage, if one had been able, over the years, but his departure did not come to pass, and presently he has become destitute, he still should go on the pilgrimage. If, considering his destitution, he is unable, he must acquire, by lawful means, enough for provisions. If he has no means of acquisition, he should request people to grant him from the Zakat or charitable funds, the necessary sum for the pilgrimage. If he dies before performing the pilgrimage, he dies in transgression. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If one dies without having performed pilgrimage, it is the same to him to die as a Jew or a Christian." Accidental inability succeeding a state of capacity does not cancel man's obligation of pilgrimage.

Such is the way for one to examine acts of obedience and to correct them.

As for sins, he should trace his hearing, eyesight, tongue, stomach, hand, foot, pudendum and the rest of his limbs, from the beginning of his maturity, then look through all his days and hours and detail to himself a record of his transgressions until they all are established, the minor and the major, and he should sift them. Some of them are between Allah and himself, i.e., do not entail injustice to others. This includes such acts as gazing at a woman unlawful for him to look at, sitting in a mosque despite a major ceremonial impurity, touching the Mushaf before performing ablution, entertaining a heresy, drinking wine, listening to entertainment, etc. in other words, all that is unconnected with harm to another person.

Repentance from these comes through regret and grief. Let him also reckon their measure as regards magnitude and duration, and seek for each of these sins a corresponding good deed. He performs good deeds in proportion to the measure of the transgressions in compliance with the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Fear Allah wherever you be and follow an evil deed with a good one to wipe it out." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Dharr). In confirmation of that, Allah said: "Surely the good deeds will drive away the evil deeds." (Hud 114)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْحَسَنَٰتِ يُذْهِبْنَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ﴾

Listening to entertainments is atoned by listening to the recitation of the Qur'an and Dhikr gatherings. Sitting in a mosque in an impure state is atoned by I'tikaf in a mosque for engaging in worship. Touching the Qur'an while unclean is atoned by esteem for the Qur'an, extensive reading from it, kissing if often, and by preparing a copy of the Book and making it an endowment. The consumption of wine is atoned by charitable donation of a lawful beverage which is better and liked by him.

It is impossible to enumerate all the transgressions. The point is to tread the opposite path. Illness is cured by its opposite. Every stain, which arose upon the heart through transgression can be erased only by an illumination raised upon it through an opposite good deed. These opposites are proportionate to one another. Therefore, each evil should be expunged with a good of its own kind but opposite in effect. White is cancelled by black, not by heat or cold. This classification and verification are subtleties toward expunging transgression. Expectation is so justified, trust so great that one should not persist in one kind of worship, even though this too is effective in erasing sin.

Such is the rule concerning sins of man towards Allah. That a thing is atoned by its opposite is indicated by the fact that the love of the mundane is the beginning of all error, and that the effect, in the heart, of the pursuit of the mundane is delight in it and craving for it. Since faced with anxieties and worries, the heart shuns the world, certainly any hurt which befalls the Muslim and draws his heart away from the mundane, will serve as an atonement. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There are sins for which only anxieties atone (or, according to another version: 'only the anxiety in search for livelihood')." (At-Tabarani, Abu Na'im and Al-Khatib on the authority of Abu

Hurairah). It is further narrated on the authority of 'A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her": "When man's sins multiply and he has no works by which to atone for them, Allah brings upon him anxieties, that should become atonement for his sins." (This is reported by Ahmad). It is said that the anxiety which enters the heart, while man is unaware, is the strain of sins, and the worry about them, the feelings of the heart at the eve of Reckoning and terror of the day of Judgement.

You might say: "Man worries mostly about his wealth, children and status. This is an error. How will it be an atonement?" in reply to that, you should know then that love for these is an error, and deprivation of these is an atonement. If man savored it, the error set in. It is narrated that Gabriel "peace be upon him" entered unto Joseph "peace be upon him" in the prison. He asked him: "How was my poor father when you left him?" he replied: "He grieved for you with the sorrow of a hundred bereaved mothers." He asked: "What does he have, then, with Allah Almighty?" he said: "The reward of one hundred martyrs." Thus, anxieties also atone for sins against Allah. This is the rule concerning sins against Allah.

As for injustices towards one's fellow-men, they too include felony and transgression of Allah's limits. For Allah has also forbidden the wronging of one's fellow. The correction of such, insofar that they pertain to Allah's limits, is to show remorse, contrition, renunciation of similar acts in the future, and the performance of good deeds counted as opposites of the sins. The repentant will requite with benevolence toward men for the hurt he may have caused them. He will atone illegal usurpation of their property by charitable gifts from his lawfully earned property. Degrading their dignity by slander and vilification will be atoned through praise for those of religiousness, telling people of what he knows of the good qualities of one's fellow, etc. The taking of life is atoned by manumission of slaves. For this is like giving life, since the slave is lost to himself and exists only for his master. Manumission is a creation, the maximum of creation man is able to do. The destruction (of life) is countered by the creation (of life).

By this you learn that what we have discussed of following the path of opposites in atonement and annulment is attested to in the Law, as the atonement for slaying is the manumission of slaves. But, even if he did all that, it would not be sufficient so long as he has not turned away from injustice to men, be it against life, or property, or dignity, or heart, I mean sheer hurt.

As for matters of life, if a man happens to kill by mistake, then his repentance is by compensation, through conceding the blood money, either from him or his closest relatives from the side of his father, and it should reach the entitled party. Such is his responsibility until the delivery would be executed. If the murder is committed intentionally, and legal retribution is due, then repentance is through (being ready to suffer) retaliation. If he was not identified, he must reveal himself to the avenger who will decide about his life: he may forgive him if he so likes or kill him if he so likes. Only by such means is the killer's responsibility fulfilled. Concealment is not permitted.

This is not like fornication, drinking wine, stealing, robbery or taking part in

an illicit affair for which legal punishment under the divine law had been stipulated, for these cases do not require that the repentant should publicly compromise himself, disclose himself or seek the application of the sacred law from the ruler. Rather, he should avail himself of Allah's protection, and carry out Allah's declared punishment upon himself by various sorts of mortification and chastisement. Pardon, in the case of sins toward Allah alone, is nigh unto the regretful repentant.

But even, if he submits his case to the authorities and the prescribed punishment is imposed, he will have done his duty, and his repentance is sound and accepted by Allah. This is attested by what is narrated of Ma'iz Ibn Malik, who came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: " O Messenger of Allah, I have stained my soul and fornicated, and I desire that you cleanse me!" The Prophet "peace be upon him" then turned him away. The next day he approached the Prophet "peace be upon him" and said to him: " O Messenger of Allah, I have fornicated!" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" turned him away. When Ma'iz came for the third time, the Prophet "peace be upon him" took up his case, and a pit was dug for Ma'iz, and the Prophet "peace be upon him" gave the order that the man be stoned to death. People, in this matter, were of two opinions. Some said: "He was ruined as his crime engulfed him." Others said: "No repentance is more sincere than his." But the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "His repentance surely would, if divided, suffice for a whole people." (Muslim on the authority of Buraidah).

It is further narrated that a woman from the Ghamid tribe came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Messenger of Allah, I have committed adultery, cleanse me!" The Prophet "peace be upon him" turned her away. On the next day, she came and said: "O Messenger of Allah, why do you turn me away? Do you reject me as you did to Ma'iz? By Allah, I am pregnant!" The Prophet the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "As for now, go away until you bear the child." When she gave birth she came with an infant boy wrapped in a tatter and said: "Here, this is the child I bore." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to her: "Go away and nurse him until he is weaned." Then, when she weaned him she came with the infant, having in his hand a piece of bread. She said: "O Messenger of Allah, I have weaned him and he has already got food." The child was given over to a man from among the Muslims. the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" gave command that a bit be dug for her to be buried unto the chest, and stoned to death. Khalid Ibn Al-Walid approached with a stone and cast it upon her head. The blood splashed upon his face and he cursed her. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" heard him insulting her, and said: "Be quiet O Khalid, for indeed, by Him in whose hand my soul is, she has certainly repented in such a way that if the tax collector repented like her, he would be forgiven." After that he issued instructions to establish funeral prayer on her and she was buried. (Muslim on the same previous authority).

As for retaliation and the punishment of false accusation, the one responsible must expiate his guilt before the one in the right. If the subject is property unlawfully usurped, treachery, or swindle in business matters by means of fraud, such as sale of spurious goods, concealing a defect in the sold goods, undercutting a workman's wages or withholding his wages, all this requires investigation, not from the limit of a man's maturity but from the beginning of its occurrence. That which is due from a youth's property, the youth, upon his attaining maturity, must pay, if the trustee failed to do so. If he does not do this, he becomes a transgressor liable for it. For the youth and the adult are equal as regards monetary claims.

Let man, then, be careful of the smallest sums from the first day of his life until the day of his repentance, before he is held responsible on the Day of Judgement. Let him examine his own self before he is examined. One who is not careful of this world, his accounting is protracted in the next. If his total obligation is, most plausibly and with all possible effort, summed up, let him write it down. Let him, also, record the names of the wronged, one by one, and travel around the world seeking them, to expiate his guilt before them or give them satisfaction. Such repentance is hard on the wrongdoers and the merchants, as they are unable to seek out all their business contacts or the heirs of these. Each one must do as much as is within his capacity. If he is unable, there remains for him only the way of profusion of good works that, on the Day of Resurrection, will prove abundant, so that they will be taken and placed on the scales of the wronged claimants. The abundance of his good deeds is measured against his wrongdoings. But if his good works do not counterbalance them, he will be saddled with some evils of the wronged claimants, so that he will perish by the evil of others.

This is the way for every repentant of repelling the claims of the wronged. This necessitates the investment of a lifetime in good deeds, commensurate with the duration of unjust behaviour. How is this possible when it involves an unknown quantity? And perhaps the end is near? Time being limited, he must be more energetic in accumulating good deeds than he was in gathering sin over extended time. Such is the rule concerning injustices to which he is under obligation.

As for his actual possessions, let him return to the rightful owner that which is known to belong to that owner. The property whose rightful owner is not known should be given in charity. If lawful possessions become mixed up with unlawful ones, he must do his best to learn the amount of the illicit property, and give in charity that amount, as has already been clarified in the Book of the Lawful and the Unlawful.

As for such verbal offense against the heart, like tormenting or defaming people, he must seek out everyone who suffered from his tongue or whose heart hurt by his actions, and seek to expiate his sins with each, one by one. If one has died or disappeared, that matter is forfeit, and correction is possible only through augmenting good deeds to be accepted as substitutes on the Day of Judgement. If he finds a claimant who releases his guilt in good faith, then that is his atonement.

The repentant must put his offense and opposition before the claimant, for ambiguous pardon is insufficient. Perhaps, if the wronged were to know all that, and the magnitude of the offense against him, he would not be inclined to forgive him, and would rather store that until the Day of Judgement, in order to take it from the repentant's good deeds or loading his own evils upon his evil record. If the repentant's offense against others includes anything that, were it mentioned or made known, would hurt the wronged person, such as the fornication with the wronged person's slave girl or female relative, or verbal reference to some secret failings, the pain may be increasing should the repentant seek to stimulate him, then the repentant's way in search of pardon is blocked. There remains but to seek release from his guilt. Still a guilt will remain. Let him seek to compensate for it through good deeds as in the case of the injustices against those now dead or missing.

Harmful remark and characterization also represent a new evil from which expiation must be sought. Whenever the repentant mentions his offense and announces it to the aggrieved, who does not permit expiation, the repentant's guilt remains. Such is the right of the aggrieved. The repentant must, therefore, subtly win him over, act in his interests, and show love and solicitude such as would take sway over his heart. Indeed, man yields to beneficence. Everyone who feels aversion to an evil may be swayed by a good deed. When the heart of him (the aggrieved man) recovers, through the abundance of (the wrongdoer's) affection and solicitude, he will permit himself pardon. If he persist in refusal, the sinner's solicitude and pleas are counted among his good deeds which, on the Day of Judgement, will possibly make good for his offense. Let his effort to gladden the other's heart through tenderness be as much as it was in inflicting harm, or surpass it. On the Day of Judgement, this will be taken as his compensation, according to the divine judgement. This is similar to one who, in this world, has damaged property, then offered the equivalent (in maintenance), but the owner declined to accept it or absolve him, and the Judge then ordered the owner to accept willingly or unwillingly. That is how Allah, the Judge of all judges, and the Fairest of all the fair, will decree on the Day of Judgement.

It is narrated in both Sahihs on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "There was, among those who were before you, a man who had killed ninety-nine persons. He inquired after the wisest man upon the earth, and was directed to a monk. He came to the monk and asked: 'One has killed ninety-nine people, is there (a possibility) of repentance for him?' he answered in the negative, thereupon The man killed him, thereby completing the number of his victims one hundred. Then he again sought after the wisest man in the land, and was directed to a learned man, to whom he said: 'One has killed a hundred men, is there repentance for him? he answered in the affirmative and said: 'Who prevents him from repenting? Go to such and such a land, where people serve Allah, worship with them, and do not return to your land, for it is an evil land.' He set out on the road but midway death overtook him. Then the angels of mercy argued over him with the angels of chastisement. The angels of mercy said: 'He came as a repentant, with

his heart directed toward Allah.' The others said: 'He has never done any good.' An angel appeared to them in a human form, and they appointed him to judge between them. He said: 'Measure the distance to the two lands; he belongs to the one which is nearer.' They measured, and found him nearer to the land he sought. So the angels of mercy took hold of him." According to another version, "he was a span closer to the righteous city, so he became one of it." In a third version, "Allah urged this side to move away and the other side to draw near, then said: 'Measure what is between them.' They found the man closer to the one by a span; and he was forgiven."

From this you may learn that there is no salvation except through the preponderance of good deeds even as little as an atom's weight. The repentant must show an abundance of good deeds. Such is the rule of intent as far as the past is concerned.

As to the determination linked to the future, it is that one should give a firm pledge to Allah, and contract with Him a firm covenant not to repeat such sins nor their like. This is like the man who, in his sickness, knows that a certain kind of fruits, for example, will cause him harm. He resolves, with determination, that he will not get the fruit so long as he remains ill. This resolution is immediately imperative, even though it can be imagined that craving will overcome him next. One is not, however, a repentant so long as he has not firmed up the resolution in the present. It is inconceivable that a repentant should succeed therein, at the start, except by means of solitude, silence, reducing food and sleep to a minimum, and sticking to lawful sustenance.

If he has lawfully inherited wealth, or a craft by which he can earn a sufficient amount, let him be content with it. The beginning of all sin is the consumption of the forbidden. How can one be repentant while persisting therein, not content with the lawful nor abstinent from the doubtful, unable to give up the cravings for food and raiment? Someone said: "He who is sincere in giving up desire and conquered himself for Allah's sake seven times, would never be afflicted by that desire." Another said: "He who has repented from sin and kept to the straight seven years, will never return to it." If the repentant is not learned, he should learn what is incumbent upon him in the future and what is forbidden, so that he would be able to stick to uprightness.

Unless man chooses solitude, his uprightness is incomplete, even though he may have renounced some sins. Such is the case of him who renounces, for instance, drinking wine, fornication or usurpation, yet this is not full repentance. Some people said that this repentance is not valid, while others said that it is right. Validity, in this context, is a vague expression. We would say to one who holds it invalid: "If you mean by this that his abstention from certain sins is of no avail at all, and that its presence is the same as its absence, then great indeed is your error. We know that the more the sins are, the more the punishment increases, and vice versa." To one who asserts the validity (of such repentance) we say: "If you mean thereby that renunciation of some sins is necessarily accepted and will inevitably lead to salvation or bliss, this, also, is an error.

Salvation and bliss come with total abstention from sin." Such is the apparent sense. We are not speaking of the subtle secrets of divine forgiveness.

If he, who takes the position that such repentance is invalid, says: "I mean thereby that repentance amounts to remorse; man feels remorse for theft, for instance, as a transgression and not as theft per se. It is impossible that he regret for it without (regretting also for) fornication, so long as his grief is due to sin being a transgression, for both have a common cause. A man who grieves over the murder of his child by sword would also grieve over the child's death by knife, because his grief is due to the death of his beloved, whether by sword or knife. Likewise man grieves over missing his Beloved, which occurs through transgression, be it by theft or fornication. How does he grieve over one but not the other? Remorse is a state brought on by the knowledge that transgression, as such, alienates the Beloved.

It is inconceivable that it would be so in the cause of some transgressions and not of others. For, if this were possible, it would be conceivable that one could repent from drinking wine from one jug but not from another. Yet, such is impossible, for the transgression, in both cases, is one, and the jugs are no more than receptacles. In the same way, the particular transgressions are (mere) tools of sin per se, while sin, insofar as it is disobedience, is one and the same. The meaning of the invalidity is that Allah has promised the repentants a rank, and this rank can be achieved only through remorse, but remorse over only some and not all of these sins is not imaginable. It is like the 'case of a property which is predicated upon offer and acceptance: if the offer and acceptance do not take place, we say that the contract is not valid, i.e., that the result, which is the disposition of property, does not occur. This is confirmed by the fact that the fruit of mere abstention is the elimination of the punishment for the sin given up. The fruit of remorse is the atonement of past sin. abstention alone could not atone theft in the absence of Remorse over it. Remorse can only be conceived (as referring to) a transgression. This applies to all sins. This is an exposition of the opinion of those who deny the validity of (partial abstention from sin). It is a clear opinion, which a fair man examines in detail to eliminate obscurity thereby.

We also assert that repentance of some sins might be to repent either from major sins without regard for the minor ones, or from minor without regard for the major, or from one major sin rather than another.

First: as for the repentance from major sins without regard for the minor, it is possible. It is known that the major sins are greater in Allah's view and are more apt to arouse Allah's displeasure and wrath. But it is easier to obtain pardon for minor sins. It is not inconceivable, then, for one to repent from the greater and feel remorse about them. This is as he who commits an offense against the family of a king and his women and also an offense against his animal. He is more fearful about the former offense in comparison with the latter. Remorse follows in proportion to the notion about the magnitude of the sin and the conviction that it alienates from Allah. It is possible to find this in Sharia. Many were the repentants among the past generations and not one of them was infallible. Repentance does not call for infallibility.

The physician might caution the patient strongly about honey, and, to a lesser degree, about sugar, in a manner that the patient will feel that the harm of sugar might never occur. The patient might then give up, by doctor's order, honey but not sugar. Such a situation is not at all impossible. If he consumed them both, because of his craving, he might regret for consuming the honey but not the sugar.

Second: it is possible that one could repent from some major sins and not others, due to hi belief that some sins of that degree are more severe and vicious in Allah's eyes. One may renounce murder, robbery, tyranny and injustices to men because he knows that the human record is not neglected, while pardon for acts which are between man and Allah is readily achieved. Just as there is disparity between major and minor sins, so it is also possible to make differentiation among the major sins themselves, and in the evaluation of the perpetrator for them. For that reason one might renounce some major sins which are not directed against his fellow-men. For example, one may renounce drinking wine but not fornication, since it becomes clear to him that wine is the key to vice, and that after drinking it he loses his mind, and becomes apt to commit all sins unknowingly. As drinking wine is graver in his opinion, a fear is aroused in him which forces him to renounce wine in the future and to regret for drinking it in the past.

Third: one may renounce a minor sin or some minor sins while persisting in a major sin, with full knowledge of its being a major sin. One may renounce slander, glancing at a woman unlawful for him to look at, or something of the same class, while persisting in drinking wine. The way this is possible is that any believer is afraid of his sins and more or less regretful of having committed them. Yet, the delight in that sin can be stronger than the heartache brought on by this fear, as factors of ignorance and neglect lead to the weakening of the fear, or there may be factors which strengthen craving. Contrition exists but it is neither constant nor strong enough to actuate resolution. If, however, he is free from a craving stronger than himself, and is able to master the drives encountered, fear overcomes the craving, conquers it, and it imposes renunciation of that transgression.

Perhaps the voracity of the sinner for wine intensifies and he is not able to endure it. He also might have rather a desire for slander and defamation of people or for glancing at females. But in this case, his fear of Allah has reached the point of taming this weaker drive, although not the stronger one. The element of fear then forces the emergence of determination toward abstention. This sinner says to himself: "If Satan vanquishes me through the overpowering desire for some sins, it is not proper that I throw off all restraint or let down the reins totally; rather, I shall fight him in some sins, and perhaps I shall prevail over him, and my victory over him in resisting some sin will be an atonement for some of my sins." Were we not to imagine this, we would not be able to conceive of the sinner as praying or fasting. One would have to say to him: "If your prayer is to other than Allah, it is of no avail, and if it is to Allah, renounce your depravity. Allah's command, in all this, is one. It is inconceivable that your prayer intends to

achieve closeness to Allah so long as you do not draw near through abandonment of depravity."

It would be impossible for him to say to Allah : "I am under two commandments and, upon disobedience, I face two penalties. I am able to vanquish Satan over one but am failing to do so about the other. I shall vanquish him as far as I can, expecting, with my mortification, that this may atone for some of my failure due to my excessive craving." But how is such absurd when it is the condition of every Muslim? Any Muslim combines obedience to Allah and disobedience for no other reason than this. If one understands this, he would understand that the victory of fear over craving for some sins is quite possible.

When fear pertains to past action, it causes remorse. Remorse, in turn, induces resolution. The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Remorse is repentance." He did not stipulate contrition of all sin. He "peace be upon him" also said: "One who renounces a sin is like him who has never sinned." He *did* not refer to the one who renounces all sins. These concepts clarify the wrongness of the claim that partial repentance is impossible due to the essential similarity of the appetites and the equal exposure to the displeasure of Allah. Yes, it is possible that one renounces drinking wine and does not renounce drinking *Nabidh* because of the disparity between them in the exposure to displeasure. One might renounce many sins and not renounce a few, for the more the sins are numerous, the more severe the punishment is. He thus fulfills the desire inasmuch as he fails to renounce, and give up a part of his desire for the Sake of Allah Almighty. Man then is like the ill person who was warned, by the physician, of fruits. He might take some little amount without doing so in excess. It follows from this that he cannot renounce a thing and does not renounce anything similar. It is inescapable that this which he renounces is in opposition to what he continues to do, either in the severity of the transgression or the victory of the craving. When this discrepancy affects the belief of the repentant, one can conceive his various states of fear and remorse as well as of renunciation. Even though he has not obeyed Allah in all command and prohibitions, his contrition over that sin, and his loyalty to his resolution to abstain, sets him in the category of him who has not sinned.

You might argue: "Can an impotent repent from fornication to which he yielded before the incidence of impotence?"

I would answer in the negative, for renunciation means remorse which induces the determination to abstain from that action which he is able to commit. But the deed a man cannot execute is gone of itself, not as a result of abstention from it. Let me say that if, after impotence, illumination and realization occur to him, he is convinced of the harm of fornication to which he yielded, and heartache, remorse and suffering are so aroused in him, that had a desire for coition remained in him, searing remorse would have tamed and mastered that desire, I would hope that such would atone for his sin, and wipe out his evil deed. Undoubtedly, had he repented before the onset of impotence and died following repentance, he would be among the repentants, even if a

situation did not arise in which his craving was stimulated, and in which it could be readily satisfied. But, he is repentant in that his contrition has attained such a level as would deflect him from fornication were his desire to surface. It is then not unlikely that the strength of contrition should, in the case of an impotent man, reach such a level, though it might not be known to himself. Everyone who does not crave for something considers himself capable of renouncing it, through minimal fear, while Allah is aware of his conscience and the measure of his contrition. Perhaps Allah will accept it from him; nay, it seems He will do.

The truth in all this goes back to the fact that the stain of transgression is effaced from the heart by two things: the searing contrition and the intense mortification to abstain from sin in the future. With the termination of craving, mortification ceases. Yet, it is not inconceivable that contrition would wax to such an extent that it obliterates the craving without self-struggle. Had it not been for this, we would have said that repentance is not accepted unless the repentant lives for a period enough to struggle with that same craving many times after repentance. But the apparent sense of Sharia does not substantiate such a condition.

You might say: "If we assume two repentants, one having lost all urge to sin, and the other retaining it while fighting against it and blocking it, which of them would be better?" in reply to that, it should be known that this is debatable among the learned. Ahmad Ibn Abu Al-Hawari and the companions of Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: "The fighter is better since, in addition to repentance, he has the merit of striving." The learned of Basra said: "The other one is the better, for, if he becomes lax in his repentance, he will still be nearer to being faultless than the struggler who is liable to relax in his struggle." Each school's opinion contains some truth but fails to encompass the full truth.

The truth of the matter is that one whose urge has been discontinued is subject to two states:

The first is that the discontinuance of the longing is due merely to a relaxation in the craving itself. Then the struggler is better than the one in this state inasmuch as his abstention through struggle is indicative of self-control and the conquest of his drives by his faith, which is a trenchant proof of the strength of conviction and belief. By strength of belief I mean the willpower emerging at the direction of certainty, and taming the craving which emerges at the direction of Satans. The struggle decidedly points to these two powers. The statement (of the Basra learned) that this one is more secure, since if he is lax he will still not return to sin, is correct, but the use of the term 'better' in this context is a mistake.

This is like saying that the impotent is better than the virile for he is secure from the risk of lust, or, that the youth is better than the adult for he is more secure (from sin), or, that the weakling is better than the king, who overpowers his enemies, for the weakling has no enemies while the king, though having been victorious many times, might, sometime, be defeated. These are the words of a man, though sound of heart, but lacking in understanding of worldly affairs, unaware that glory lies in facing risks and grandeur is suspended on confronting

dangers. One may say that the hunter who has no horse nor dog is better in the art of hunting and of higher rank than one who possesses a horse and a dog, for he is safe of the bolting of his horse, which may result in breaking his limbs when he falls on the ground; he is safe, also, from being bitten and attacked by the dog. This is indeed an error. On the contrary, the owner of a horse and dog, being strong and knows how to control them, is better off and more likely to attain the felicity of hunting.

The second is to thwart the longing by virtue of the strength of conviction and the sincerity of the preceding struggle as it reaches the point of taming the fury of the craving until it is controlled by the discipline of Sharia, so that it is activated only by a directive from the faith and, because of the dominance of the faith over it, it lies inactive. This is a higher grade than that of the struggler who endures the fury of desire and of curbing it. The statement that such a person has not the merit of striving fails to grasp the goal of striving, as if striving were an end unto itself. But the end of striving is the elimination of the greed of the enemy lest it should drag you into his cravings. If he fails in his effort to involve you, he will not impede you from following the path of religion. Once you have subdued him and attained the goal, you are victorious, while so long as you continue to strive you are yet in the pursuit of victory.

Compare one who has vanquished the enemy and enslaved him, as against one who is engaged in fighting on the battle line and does not know how he will fare. Or, take a man who has taught a dog to hunt, and trained a horse, both staying with him after the dog has lost its voracity and the horse its recalcitrance, and compare him with one who is yet engaged in the difficult animal training. Some people have gone astray on this point, and considered that the struggle is, itself, the ultimate goal. They did not grasp that the struggle is conducted in order to get rid of the impediments on the Way. Others considered that the total curbing and elimination of the desires is an end unto itself, to the extent that one tried that, and when he failed he said: "This is absurd." He then rejected Sharia, and followed the road of licentiousness giving himself to the pursuit of passions. All of that is ignorance and error, as we have stated in the Book of the self-Discipline in the quarter of Destructives.

You may ask: "What do you say of two repentants, one who forgot sin, did not engage in sinful thoughts, and the other who held sin in full view of his eyes, constantly reflecting on it, and then burning in contrition. Which of the two is better?" in reply to that, it should be known that this is also subject to controversy. One says: "True repentance is that you set your sin before your eyes." The other says: "True repentance is to forget your sin." We consider each school correct but in relation to two situations.

The speech of Sufis is always deficient. Indeed, the usage of each of them is to relate only his own mystic experience, another's does not concern him. The answers they give differ according to the variation in their mystic experiences. This is a shortcoming as regards mood, will and depth, inasmuch as the person in question is limited in view to his own experience, the other's state being of no concern to him. For his way is to Allah Himself and to mystic experiences. Man's

way to Allah may be knowledge. But there are many ways to Allah, even though they differ as to closeness to or remoteness from Allah. Although they share divine guidance, only Allah knows who is the best guided of them.

I argue that To ponder about the sin, remember it, and be distressed by it is an accomplishment in the case of the novice. If he were to forget it, his vexation would not increase nor would his will and urge to follow the Way be strengthened, for then he would be left without the grief and the fear which impedes his reverting to similar sins. For the heedless, this is an accomplishment, but for the mystic traveler a deficiency. It is an occupation which prevents from following the Way. The mystic must not swerve from the way, and if he makes progress, and the illumination of gnosis and the shimmering of the mystery is revealed to him, it will engross him, and no scope will remain for attention to previous experiences. This is an accomplishment. But if the traveler to a certain town is hampered on the road by an obstructing river, his trouble, in fording it, is prolonged because he had previously destroyed his bridge. Should he sit on the banks of the river after fording it, and weep, lamenting his destruction of the bridge, this would constitute an additional hindrance engaging him after coping with the first. Truly, if the time is not fitting for departure, either because it is night and the going is impractical, or because there are rivers on the road, and he is fearful of crossing them, let his weeping and sadness, over the destruction of the bridge, go on through the night, so that in the prolonging of grief, his determination not to return to such a situation, will be confirmed. If such admonition has produced in him inner strength not to revert, then it is more appropriate for him to follow the path rather than engage in recounting the destruction of the bridge and weeping over it. This is known only to one who understands the way, the goal, the barrier and how to pursue the way. We have already referred to this in the Book of Knowledge and in the quarter of Destructives.

We must say that the prerequisite for the constancy of repentance is that man should meditate much on the delights of Paradise to increase his longing. If he is a youth, he should not ponder and think about all that parallels worldly things, such as the heavenly maidens and palaces, for such reflections may perhaps stimulate his longing, with the result that he will pursue transitory worldly delights rather than the deferred hereafter. Nay, he should reflect, solely, on the delight of gazing exclusively at Allah's countenance, which has no worldly parallel. Thus, even recalling sin may arouse desire. The novice might be provoked, and forgetfulness, in such a case, is preferable.

You should not be dissuaded from believing this examination by what you are told of David's weeping and lamentation. Drawing analogy between yourself and the prophets is an utter distortion, because they may have descended, by word and deed, to the levels befitting their peoples to whom they were sent to give guidance, and they were not sent but to act in a way which may benefit their people, even if it detracts somewhat from the peak of their station. Some masters, whenever they assigned their disciples any type of spiritual exercise, would join them therein, not because they were in need of it after having accomplished their

struggle and soul-training, but in order to facilitate the matter for the disciple. This is why the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "I do not forget but I forget to prescribe laws." or, in another version, "but I neglect to prescribe laws." (Malik in his Muwatta' but without tracing it up to the Prophet himself). Do not wonder at this. Peoples under the protective wing of the prophets' compassion, are as youth under the loving wings of their fathers, and as the cattle under the care of the shepherd. Do you not see how a father, when he wishes to talk to his young child, comes down to the child's level of articulation? Thus the Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to Al-Hassan: "Kakh, Kakh!", when the child took a date, from those assigned to charity, and put it in his mouth. (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah). The Prophet "peace be upon him" did not lack the fluency to say: "Drop that date for it is forbidden." Yet when he realized that the child would not understand his locution, he abandoned eloquence and sank to the child's usage. He who trains an ewe or a bird must make sounds for it, using as a device of instruction chattering or whistling like an animal or bird. Beware lest you neglect such intricacies, the stumbling block of the Gnostics, let alone the heedless. We ask Allah, in His tenderness and generosity, good success.

Exposition Of How People Differ In The Perseverance Of Repentance

It should be known that those who turn unto Allah in repentance are of four categories.

The first category: the sinner repents and keeps his repentance intact for all his remaining days. He corrects that in which he was remiss, and it does not occur to him to revert to his sins, except for those lapses of habit from which man cannot disengage himself as long as he is not on the level of Prophethood. This is integrity of repentance. He who has it goes ahead with good, and substitutes good deeds for evil. Such repentance is called 'sincere repentance.' The name of this calm soul, which returns to its Lord well-pleased, well-pleasing is the serene self. These are the people referred to in the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The solitary who are totally devoted to the invocation of Allah, the invocation frees them of their burden so that they appear on the Day of Judgement light (of the burden of sins)." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah). Indeed, in this lies an indication that they were oppressed by burdens which the invocation of Allah removed from them.

The people of this category are divided into different levels with respect to their leaning towards appetites: from the repentant, there are such as whose desires subsided under the domination of gnosis, upon whom their pressure abated, and who follows the Way undisturbed by fighting them; the one who incessantly is struggling with the soul but is able to contend with it and deter it. The differentiation also pertains to the levels of struggle as regards quantity, duration and type. Men differ also as regards the length of lifespan. One is grabbed, dying soon after his repentance, and is gladdened by that for his escape and death before debility. Another is granted time, continues a long

strife and endurance, his integrity continuous and his good deeds multiplying. The state of this one is higher and better since every evil is wiped out by a good deed.

A scholar said: "The sin, which the offender committed, is atoned only when it overcomes man ten times as true desire, but he renounces it, and breaks his lust out of fear of Allah." But even, it would be implausible to stipulate this, though the great impact of such a rule, if imposed, is undeniable. However, the weak disciple should not follow this path lest the appetites be aroused, the circumstances brought on for the sin to overcome man, but when he aspires to desist, he may not be able to escape the reins of desire at will. Consequently he will proceed with the sin and he will break his repentance. Rather, the path of repentance is to flee from the outset elements of sin, thus barring to man the paths of sin. At the same time, he will seek to conquer his lust as far as possible. Thereby his repentance will be safe from the outset.

The second category: the repentant follows the path of integrity in the major acts of obedience and abandons all mortal abominations, yet is not free of sins which grip him unawares and without premeditation. He suffers from them in the course of his affairs, without intention to commit them. But whenever he commits them he censures himself, regrets, is sad, and renews his resolution to be most careful to avoid circumstances which expose him to such acts. This soul is worthy of being the 'upbraiding soul' as it rebukes man for the objectionable matters he pursues though with no strong will or calculation or intention.

This is also a high rank though inferior to the first category. It is the state of most repentants, as evil is so kneaded into human substance, that rarely is man free from it. Yet, the goal of man's effort is that the good in him should prevail over the evil, so that the scale of good deeds will be heavier and favour his record. But it is hardly imaginable that the scale of evil deeds would be altogether void. Men of this category hold the good promise from Allah as shown from His statement: "Those who avoid the heinous sins and indecencies, save lesser offenses." (An-Najm 32)

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّمَمَ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

That is because surely your Lord is wide in His forgiveness. As each lesser offense results in a minor sin, without man being accustomed to it, it is proper that it be among those lesser offenses which are forgiven. Allah said: "And who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allah and pray forgiveness for their sins." (Al Imran 135)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟ فَٰحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟ لِذُنُوبِهِمْ ﴿١٣٥﴾ ﴾

Their recompense is forgiveness. Because of their regret and self censure, Allah commends them in spite of their wronging themselves.

To those of this class, refers the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him": "The best of you all are those who are subject to temptation and are contrite." (Al-Baihaqi). In another tradition he "peace be upon him" said: "The

believer is like a spike of grain, at times he recovers, and at times he is swayed." (Abu Ya'li and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Anas; At-Tabarani on the authority of Ammar Ibn Yasir; and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Al-Hassan).according to a third tradition: "It is unavoidable that the believer should sin from time to time." (At-Tabarani and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

All these statements prove decisively that this amount (of minor offenses) does not invalidate repentance, and does not put the perpetrator in the category of the persistent sinners. To deprive a man of this kind of hope to reach the level of the repentant, is to act like the physician who induces a healthy person to despair of remaining healthy if he eats fruit and hot dishes from time to time, though not persistently and continuously; or like the religious jurisprudent who induces in the student a despair of ever attaining the degree of a religious jurisprudent, because, at rare and sporadic intervals, he may be lax in repetition and let up taking notes. This points out the fault of the physician and the religious jurisprudent. On the contrary, a (real) religious scholar is he who does not induce people to despair of attaining the grades of felicity because of temporary failures and the yielding to fleeting seizures of evil. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "All human beings are sinners, and the best of the sinners are the repentant who pray for forgiveness." (At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim on the authority of Anas). Allah said: "These shall be given their wage twice over for that they patiently endured, and avert evil with good." (Al-Qasas 54)

﴿ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُواْ وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

He has not described them as totally devoid of evil.

The third category: the one who repents and, for some time, persists in uprightness. Then, the appetites involve him in some sins, and, unable to curb the desire, he commits them with intent and premeditation. Yet, along with that, he persists in acts of obedience and avoids some sins despite drive and opportunity (to commit them). But as this desire or two may overcome him, he wishes only that Allah would enable him to curb it and that He protect him from its evil. Such is his aspiration as he satisfies the desire, but in the end he is contrite and says: "Would that I had not done it. I will repent from it and strive to subdue it." But, he is tempted and puts off repentance, time after time, day after day. This soul is called the 'tempted soul', about which Allah said: "And others have confessed their sins; they have mixed a righteous deed with another evil." (At-Tawbah 102)

﴿ وَءَاخَرُونَ ٱعْتَرَفُواْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُواْ عَمَلًا صَٰلِحًا وَءَاخَرَ سَيِّئًا ﴿١٠٢﴾ ﴾

On account of his assiduity in obedience and his aversion to the sins he perpetrates, his case is hopeful. Perhaps Allah will turn to him. Yet, his end is perilous because of his procrastination and postponement. Perhaps he will be snatched (by death) before the repentance, and his case will come under (Allah's) pleasure. If Allah, in His generosity, corrects him, cures his defect and grants him repentance, he will join the preceding categories. But if his misfortune overcomes

and his desire overtakes him, then it may be feared that in the end he will eternally abide in what was predestined for him (i.e., hellfire).

If it is impossible for the student to avoid the distractions from learning, this difficulty indicates that he is predestined to be an ignorant, and the hope, in his case, becomes weak. But if diligence facilitates learning, it indicates that he was predestined to be one of the learned. Similarly the relation of the joys and attainments of the hereafter to good and bad deeds, according to divine preordainment, is like the relation of sickness and health to the consumption of food and drugs, and like the relation of the attainment of soul comprehension, by which the high dignities in this world are merited, to the abandonment of indolence and diligence in soul training. Just as no soul but that, which has become understanding through prolonged training, lends itself to the dignities of leadership, judgeship and advancement in knowledge, so none but a sound heart, which has become pure through prolonged purification and refinement, is fit to gain the hereafter, and closeness to the Master of the Universe. Thus has it been preordained by Allah's direction. That is why Allah said: "By the soul, and that which shaped it and inspired it to lewdness and god-fearing! prosperous is he who purifies it, and failed has he who seduces it." (Ash-Shams 7-10)

﴿ وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا ۝ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَىٰهَا ۝ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ۝ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا ۝ ﴾

When man falls into sin, and the sin becomes a debit, repentance a credit, this is then one of the signs of a setback. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "A man can perform for seventy years the deeds of the people of Paradise, until others say that he is one of the Paradise dwellers, and there remains between him and Paradise only a span. Then, what is written overtakes him, and he performs an act of the people of hellfire, and enters hellfire."(both sheikhs on the authority of Sahl Ibn Sa'd, with a slight variation of wording; and Ahmad on the authority of Abu Hurairah). Fear of the end is prior to repentance. Each breath is an end to that which was prior to it inasmuch as death might be contiguous to it. Let man, then, be attentive to each moment lest he fall into the perilous. Long is regret when it is of no avail.

The fourth category: the repentant who proceeds, for a time, in uprightness but then reverts to the temptation of sin or sins without admonishing his soul to repent and without regret for his action. Rather, he becomes heedlessly absorbed in following his appetites. Such a person is among those who persist in sin. Such is called 'the soul that commands to evil' and flees from good Therefore the evil end may be feared, and his affair is in Allah's pleasure. If he is destined for an evil end, he suffers endless misery; and if he is destined for the reward most fair, so that he dies on monotheism, then deliverance from hellfire can be expected for him, at least after some time. Possibly he will be included in the broad pardon because of a hidden inscrutable cause. His is like the case in which it is not impossible for a man to enter a ruin to find a treasure, and quite accidentally, find it; or to sit at home and be made learned by Allah without study, as it happened to the prophets "peace be upon them".

Seeking forgiveness through acts of obedience is like searching for knowledge through effort and repetition, or like seeking wealth through trade and travel. Seeking forgiveness through sheer hope, despite corrupt acts, is like seeking treasures in ruins or knowledge from angelic teaching. If only the one who worked hard could learn! If only the one who traded would gain wealth! If only one who fasted and prayed would be forgiven! All men are deprived (of ultimate happiness) except those who know. Those who know are all debarred except those who act. Those who act are all precluded except for the righteous, and the righteous are in great peril. Just as one destroyed his house, squandered his wealth, and left himself and his dependents hungry, claiming that he anticipates Allah's generosity in providing for him a treasure to be found under his destroyed home (even though it is not beyond Allah's power and generosity), is considered, by the sensible, as an ignorant and deluded man, likewise, , one who expects pardon from Allah's generosity, while he is negligent in obedience, persisting in sin, and not treading the path of forgiveness, is considered, by sensible people, as demented.

One can only be astonished at the reasoning of this idiot and his propagating his foolishness in a nice form when he says: "Allah is generous, His paradise is not too narrow for one like me, nor does my sin injure Him." Then you see him traveling overseas and hurtling perils in search of dinars. Should he be told: "Indeed Allah is generous, the dinars of His treasury do not fall short of your need, and your indolence in abandoning commerce will not harm you; sit, then, in your home and perhaps He will provide for you in an unanticipated manner", he would consider the speaker stupid and would mock at him. He would say: "What is this nonsense? The heavens do not rain gold and silver. That must be earned. Thus Allah ordained it, and set His process in motion. Allah's usage is immutable."

Fool is he, when he does not grasp that the Master of the hereafter and the Master of this life is one and the same, and that His usage in both worlds does not vary. This was announced when Allah said: "And that a man shall have to his account only as he has labored." (An-Najm 39)

﴿ وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴾

How, then, can the man believe that Allah is generous in the hereafter but not so in this life? How can he say that laxity in acquiring wealth is not a requisite of divine generosity while laxity in works for (attaining) abiding possession and eternal felicity is such a requisite, and, further, that Allah, by virtue of generosity, will give him in the hereafter without (human) effort, but usually will hold back, despite man's effort, in this world? He forgets Allah's statement: "And in heaven is your provision, and that you are promised." (Adh-Dhariyat 22)

﴿ وَفِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴾

O Allah, save us from blindness and going astray.

This is nothing save standing on one's head and immersion in the darkness of ignorance. To such a man may apply Allah's statement: "Ah, if you could see the

guilty hanging their heads before their Lord (saying): 'our lord, we have seen and heard; now return us, that we may do righteousness.'" (As-Sajdah 12)

﴿ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا۟ رُءُوسِهِمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَآ أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَٱرْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا ﴾

That is, we have seen that You were right when You said: "And that man shall have to his account only as he has labored." (An-Najm 39)

﴿ وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴾

So turn us back, we shall labour. At that point no alteration is possible and he deserves chastisement. We seek refuge with Allah from the urges of ignorance and doubt, and of suspicion that necessarily leads to an evil fate in the hereafter and resurrection.

Exposition Of What Must The Repentant Hasten To Do If He Sins Either With Intention And Dominant Desire Or By Chance

It should be known that repentance, contrition and action toward atonement through good deeds to counter the sin, as we have mentioned, are incumbent upon him. If the soul, because of the triumph of desire, does not assist toward the resolution to abstain, then he has failed in one of the two imperatives. He should not abandon the second which is to ward off the evil deed with a good one so as to obliterate the former, that he may be of those who mix a righteous deed with an evil one. The good deeds which atone evil, are through the heart, the tongue or the limbs. Let the good deed stand in the stead of the evil with its ramifications.

In his heart let him atone by entreating Allah for pardon and forgiveness, and by humbling himself with the self-abasement of the fugitive slave. His humiliation should be manifest to others in reducing his rank among them. The sinful fugitive has nothing to be proud of among other people. Likewise, he should harbor in his heart benevolence toward Muslims, and the resolve to perform the acts of worship.

His tongue should confess the sin and ask for forgiveness by saying: "O my Lord, I have stained my soul and have done evil, forgive my sins." Thus he should multiply the kinds of apology we have cited in the Book of Invocations and Supplications.

The limbs should be engaged in acts of worship, charity and various acts of obedience. Some sayings of the Companions indicate that pardon of sin is expected if the sin is followed by eight acts, four of which are acts of the heart: repentance or resolution to repent, wish to desist from sin, fear of sin's punishment, and desire for forgiveness. Four are acts of the limbs: that following sin you should offer a two-rak'ah prayer, then seek Allah's forgiveness after them seventy times, say one hundred times: "Exalted be Allah the Great, with Whose Praise I exalt Him", then give alms, and then fast for a day. According to the saying of a Companion: "You should perform ablution perfectly, enter the mosque and offer a two-rak'ah prayer." (those of Sunan on the authority of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq). Or a four-rak'ah prayer for atonement according to a certain

tradition (by Al-Baihaqi, Ibn Mardawaih on the authority of Ibn Abbas). According to another tradition: "When you have done an evil, follow it with an atoning good deed. A secret (evil act) should be followed by a secret (good act) and a public (evil act) by a public (good act)." (Al-Baihaqi and At-Tabarani on the authority of Mu'adh). It is said that charity given in secret atones the sins of night, and charity given in public atones the sins of day.

It is narrated in an authentic tradition that a man said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "I have taken up with a woman and I have done with her all save sexual relation. Judge upon me with the judgement of Allah." The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Have you not prayed with us the early morning prayer?" The man answered in the affirmative. The Prophet "peace be upon him" then said: "Indeed, good deeds cancel the evil ones." (This narration is reported as abridged by both sheikhs on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud; and Muslim alone on the authority of Anas and Abu Umamah, with a slight variation of wording). This indicates that approaching women save fornication is a minor sin, which prayer atones, in accordance with the statement of the Prophet "peace be upon him": "The five (obligatory) prayers are an atonement for all that happens between them save the major sins." Under all circumstances, man should every day take himself to account, sum up his evil acts, and strive to cancel them out with good deeds.

You might say: "How can the prayer for pardon be beneficial without untying the knot of persistence? In a particular tradition it is narrated: "One who prays for pardon from sin, while persisting in it, is as one who mocks at the verses of the Qur'an." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Ibn Abbas). One used to say: "I pray for Allah's pardon for my saying: 'I pray for Allah's pardon'." It is said: "Prayer for pardon with the tongue is the repentance of liars." Rabi'ah Al-'Adawiyyah said: "Our prayer for pardon needs much apology."

In reply to that, it should be known that innumerable Prophetic narrations have been handed down on the merit of prayer for pardon, we have mentioned in the Book of Invocations and Supplications, to the point that Allah connected the prayer for pardon with the life of the Messenger "peace be upon him", as shown from His saying: "But Allah would never chastise them, with thee among them; Allah would never chastise them as they begged forgiveness." (Al-Anfal 33)

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

One of the Companions used to say: "We have two assurances of clemency. One of them, the Prophet's being among us, is gone, and only the prayer for pardon remains. Were that to disappear, we would perish." (Ahmad on the authority of Abu Musa; and Ibn Mardawaih on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

We say, then, that prayer for pardon which is the repentance of liars, is that which pertains merely to the tongue, with the heart having no share, like the utterance of a man who, by habit and with utmost neglect, says: "I pray for Allah's forgiveness", or when he hears the description of hellfire, says: "We seek refuge with Allah from it", without his heart being affected. This refers to the mere movement of the tongue and is of no avail. Yet, if the heart

implores Allah and prayer to Him is added in the request of pardon, with sincere will, pure intent and desire, then it is, in itself, a pious deed, and may succeed in cancelling out the evil deed. Such is understood by the traditions handed down on the merit of seeking pardon. The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "One who prays for pardon does not persist (in sin), even if he reverts (to sin) seventy times during a day." This is tantamount to prayer for pardon with the heart.

Repentance and prayer for pardon have various stages. Even their beginnings are not devoid of benefit, though the initial benefit is not like the final benefit. Sahl said: "Never can man do without his Lord. The best man can do is return to Him in every matter. If a man transgresses he should say: "Lord! Forgive me." When man is through with his sin, he should say: " Lord! Grant me immunity from sin." If man acts in repentance, he says: "Lord! Accept it from me."Sahl was also asked about the prayer for pardon which atones sins. He said: "The beginning of the prayer for pardon is response, then turning (to Allah), and then (full) repentance. Response consists of acts of the limbs, turning (to Allah) of acts of the heart, and repentance is man's approach to his Master, promising to renounce his evil nature. Then he prays for Allah's pardon for his actual failings, his ignorance of divine grace and his ingratitude. At that point he will be forgiven and he will attain refuge with Allah, which leads to a shift to solitude, stability, elucidation, contemplation, gnosis, confidential conversation, purity, friendship, and then secret discourse which is intimacy. This does not establish itself in a man's heart until knowledge is his nourishment, supplication his sustenance, contentment his provision and reliance on Allah his companion. Then Allah will gaze upon him, raise him unto the throne. His station will be that of the throne bearers."

Sahl was also asked about the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The repentant is Allah's beloved." He said: "He is beloved when he becomes of " Those that turn (to Allah) in repentance; that serve Him, and praise Him; that wander in devotion to the Cause of Allah; that bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer; that enjoin good and forbid evil; and observe the limits set by Allah; (these do rejoice). So proclaim the glad tidings to the Believers." (At-Tawbah 112)

﴿ ٱلتَّٰٓئِبُونَ ٱلۡعَٰبِدُونَ ٱلۡحَٰمِدُونَ ٱلسَّٰٓئِحُونَ ٱلرَّٰكِعُونَ ٱلسَّٰجِدُونَ ٱلۡأٓمِرُونَ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ
وَٱلنَّاهُونَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ وَٱلۡحَٰفِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ ٱللَّهِۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ١١٢ ﴾

Further, he said: "The beloved is he who does not engage in that which his beloved abhors."

The point is that repentance has two effects. The first is the atonement of evil so that man becomes as one who has never sinned. The second is the attainment of high degrees so that he becomes a friend. Atonement, also, is of (various) stages. It may be a total obliteration of the sin, or a reduction thereof. The difference depends on the different grades of repentance. The prayer for pardon through the heart, and correction by good deeds, even if man is not yet free from persistence in sin, is of the initial stage and is not

without some benefit. You must not think it is irrelevant whether it is present or absent. For men of vision and masters of hearts know beyond doubt, that the statement of Allah: "And whoso has done an atom's weight of good shall see it" (Az-Zalzalah 7)

﴿ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴾

Is true and that, just as a grain cast upon the balance is not without effect, so, also, a grain's weight of good is not without effect. If the first grain has no consequence, surely the second would be like it, and the balance would not be upset by the load of them. That is, evidently, impossible. But the scale of good deeds is given preponderance by the atoms of good until it carries weight and lifts away the scale of impious deeds. Beware, lest you belittle the smallest measure of transgression, without disavowing it. You will be like the stupid woman who neglects her spinning excusing herself by the fact that she is unable to produce more than one thread per hour. She said: "What is the benefit of one thread? What impact does it have upon a garment?" Fool is she, for she does not comprehend that a worldly garment is achieved threat by thread, and that worldly bodies, despite the expansion of the world's areas, are collections of individual atoms. Supplication and apology with the heart, therefore, are a good deed that does not at all get lost before Allah.

I say that prayer for pardon only with the tongue is also a good deed inasmuch as such movement of the tongue, even heedlessly, is better than wagging of the tongue, at the same time, in slander against a fellow Muslim or useless chatter. Nay, it is better than to remain silent (without uttering the prayer for pardon). Its merit is manifest in comparison to silence while, on the other hand, it is a shortcoming in comparison to the action of the heart. That is why one disciple said to his master, Abu 'Uthman Al-Maghribi: "My tongue, at times, flows with the supplication of Allah and the recitation of the Qur'an, even though my heart is heedless." The master said: "Give thanks to Allah, since He engaged one of your limbs in the good cause, accustomed it to supplication, and used it not in evil nor accustom it to wasteful chatter."

What he mentioned is true. If the limbs become conditioned to good, to the point that this becomes part of their nature, this will repel much sins. If one who accustomed his tongue to prayer for pardon hears another person lie, his tongue reverts spontaneously to its conditioning and utters: "I ask for Allah's forgiveness!" If one has been conditioned to chatter, his tongue proceeds to say: "How stupid you are!, or, how ugly is your lie!" If he who has been conditioned to utter "I seek refuge with God" happens to be present at the very beginning of an evildoer's evil, he says, by reflex: "We seek refuge with Allah." But if the tongue is conditioned to chatter, he hastens to say: "May Allah curse him!" Man then sins in one of those two expressions, and is safe with the other. His safety is a consequence of the good habituation of his tongue. Such is one of the meanings of the Allah's statement: "Allah suffers not to be lost the wage of the good-doers" (At-Tawbah 120)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

And: "And if it be a good deed, He will double it, and give from Himself a mighty wage." (An-Nisa' 40)

﴿ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

Consider how it is doubled when he makes the heedless prayer for forgiveness a habit of the tongue until, with that habit, he repels the evil of disobedience involved in slander, malediction and officiousness. This is the doubling, in this world, of minor acts of obedience; the doubling in the hereafter is greater, did they but know. Beware lest you discern, in acts of obedience, only hardships, with the result that your longing for worship wanes. Indeed, this is an intrigue spread out by Satan, in his accursedness, for the deluded. He made them believe that they are insightful and understanding about hidden things and mysteries. (They say:) "So what is the benefit of our supplication with the tongue while the heart is heedless?" By this those people are divided into three kinds: one who wrongs himself; one who adopts a middle course; and one who proceeds in doing good.

As for him who proceeds in doing good, he says: "You are right, cursed one, but it is a right saying with which you seek a wrong intent. Certainly, then, I should doubly chastise you. I shall defy you in two respects, by adding the movement of the heart to that of the tongue." He is like one who treats Satan's wound by sprinkling salt on it.

As for the deluded wrongdoer, he feels, in himself, the conceit of sagacity for this minor intricacy. Then, he is incapable of sincerity in the heart, abandoning at the same time the habituation of the tongue in the supplication of Allah. In this way, he aids Satan, and is hung by the rope of his own delusion, so that there is complete collaboration and harmony between the two. This case is like the statement: "The water skin fits its (skin) cover, it fits it and adjusts to it."

As for the one who follows a middle course, he is unable to defy Satan by associating the heart in (his) practice. But at the same time, he understands the deficiency of the movement of the tongue as compared with that of the heart, and its completion in comparison to silence and chatter. The result is that he follows the right course persistently, and asks Allah to involve the heart, with the tongue, in habituation of the good.

The one who proceeds (to do good) is like the weaver whose weaving was faulted, so he abandoned it, and became a scribe. The failing wrongdoer is like the one who abandoned weaving totally and became a street cleaner. The one following the middle course is like a man who fails to become a scribe but says: "I do not deny that weaving is unpleasant, but, the weaver can be faulted (only) when compared to the scribe and not when compared to the street cleaner. If I am incapable of being a scribe,- I will not abandon the weaving."

That is why Rabi'ah Al-'Adawiyyah said: "Our prayer for pardon needs much apology." Do not think that she faults the movement of the tongue as supplication of Allah. Rather, she faults the heedlessness of the heart. Man must apologize for the negligence of the heart, not for the action of his tongue. If he also refrains from asking for pardon verbally, he needs two entreaties to pardon,

not one. That is how you should understand the fault of what is faulted and the praise of what is praised. Else you will remain ignorant of the meaning of the statement of the righteous: "The good deeds of the pious are the misdeeds of the Near-Stationed."

These matters are established relatively, and should not be taken absolutely. Nay, the smallest measures of obedience or rebellion should not be regarded with slightness. That is why Ja'far As-Sadiq said: "Allah Almighty has concealed three in three: His pleasure in an act of obedience: so that you should not disdain any such act, as perhaps that one solely pleases Him. He concealed His anger in an act of transgression: so do not belittle any such act, as perhaps this one solely arouses His wrath. He concealed His allies among His worshipers: so, do not disdain any one of them, for perhaps it is he who is Allah's ally." He added: "and he has concealed His response to supplication: so, do not cease to supplicate Him, perhaps the response will follow it."

FOURTH PILLAR

ON REMEDY OF REPENTANCE; AND THE WAY OF TREATMENT FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF KNOT OF PERSISTENCE

It should be known to you that men are of two types. Firstly, there is the young man who has no sensual desire, having grown up in (the pursuit of) good and the avoidance of evil. He is the one about whom the Prophet said: 'Your Lord is delighted by a youth who has no sensual desire.'[10] This, however, is extremely rare. Secondly, there is the man who is not without sin. Further, this second group is divided into the persistent and the repentant. It is our aim to explain how the knot of persistence is to be treated, and to indicate the remedy therefore.

Know, then, that the cure which is repentance is attained only by the remedy. One cannot, however, prescribe the remedy without diagnosing the malady, for remedy means to counteract the causes of the malady. For every disease results *from* a cause, and the remedy for it consists of dissolving the cause, removing it and cancelling it. A thing is cancelled only by its opposite. The cause of persistence is only heedlessness and appetite. Heedlessness is only opposed by knowledge and appetite - by forbearance in eliminating the factors leading to appetite. Heedlessness is the beginning of error. Allah has said: and those - they are the heedless ones; without a doubt, in the world to come they will be the losers . There is, therefore, no medication (conducive) to repentance except a compound' of the sweetness of knowledge and the bitterness of endurance. Just as oxymel combines the sweetness of sugar and the acidity of vinegar, aiming, with each, at a different end in their combined impact, in order that the causes that provoke the bile be curbed, so you must understand the treatment of the heart against the measure of the malady of persistence present in it. Now, this remedy has two roots: Knowledge and endurance. These must be explained.

You might ask: Does every knowledge avail in breaking down persistence or is some specific knowledge necessary?

Know, then, that all kinds of knowledge are remedies for the heart's maladies. Yet, for each malady there is a specific knowledge. Just as the science of medicine

is effective in the treatment of disease in general, yet each malady requires specific (specialized) knowledge, so also (is the case of) the treatment of persistence. Let us, then, discuss the specificity of that knowledge by comparison with the diseases of the body so that it be more readily understandable. We say, therefore, that the patient must believe certain propositions.

Firstly, he must believe, in general, that sickness and health have causes which he arrives at by the (exercise of) selection in accord with what Allah has determined. This belief is at the very root of medicine. For, one who has no faith in it will not engage in therapy, and is sure to perish. What corresponds to this, in our context, is the belief in the root of revelation, namely, that felicity in the hereafter has a cause, obedience, while wretchedness (also) has a cause, transgression. This is the faith in the root of the revelations. This must be secured either by inquiry or conformism - both varieties of faith.

Secondly, the patient must trust a certain physician, i.e., that he is learned in medicine, skilled, and trustworthy in his judgement, not deceiving or lying. Faith on the basis of medicine will not avail the patient, in itself, without this belief. In our context, the corresponding element is the knowledge of the Apostle's veracity, and the belief that all of what he said is true and right, with no falsehood or discrepancy.

Thirdly, the patient must heed the doctor's warning as regards the consumption of fruit and harmful substances in general, so that the fear of deficient protection overcomes him. The intensity of the fear, then, will motivate him to seek protection. In religion the corresponding element is - a) attentiveness to the Qur'an verses and the traditions which include the call to piety and warning against the commission of sins and the pursuit of cravings, and b) the belief in everything he hears on the subject, without doubt or distrust, so that the fear is aroused in him which reinforces for endurance, that other pillar of treatment.

Fourthly, he must listen to the physician concerning the malady and what to beware of, so that (the physician) might inform him in detail, in the first instance, which of his actions, conditions, food and drinks, may harm him. Not every patient need avoid everything, nor will just any medication avail him. Rather, for each specific malady there is specific information and specific treatment. The corresponding element in religion is that not every person suffers from every craving or sin. Rather, every believer (has a propensity towards) a certain sin or certain sins. But then, he is an immediate and pressing need to recognize that these are sins, that they are injurious, what the measure of their harm is, how to arrive at desisting from them, and, finally, how to atone for such of them as have occurred.

Such knowledge is dealt with by the doctors of religion, the learned, who are the heirs of the prophets. The sinner, then, if he is aware of his transgression, must seek treatment from the doctor, that is, from the '-slim. If the sinner does not know that what he is doing is a sin, the learned should inform him thereof. Each learned should be responsible for his area, town, quarter, mosque or shrine. He should instruct his folk in their religion, and distinguish that which

may harm them from that which may benefit them, that which will make them miserable from that which will make them happy. The 'slim must not wait to be asked about this. Rather, he must devote himself to rallying the people, as the learned are the heirs of the prophets. The prophets did not abandon the people to their ignorance but, instead, the prophets called upon the people in their assemblies and, originally would go from door to door, seeking the people one by one in order to give them guidance. The sick of heart "Are not aware of their illness, just as he, upon whose face leprosy has broken out and who has no mirror, does not know of his leprosy as long as another person does not inform him thereof. Such is the personal duty of all the learned.

All rulers must appoint, in each village and quarter, a devout jurisprudent to instruct the people in their religion. People are born ignorant and bringing the call (of Islam) to them, in both root and branch, is imperative. This world is the abode of the ill inasmuch as only the dead are in the bowels of the earth and only the sick on its face. The ailing in heart are more numerous than the ailing of body. The learned are the physicians, and the rulers are the custodians of the abode of the ill. Just as the physician surrenders the patient who does not take care of himself or who has been overcome by insanity to a custodian, to confine the patient in fetters, forestalling his damaging himself or others, so every patient that does not respond to the scholar's treatment is surrendered to the ruler, in order that the ruler restrict possible evil to and from the ailing.

The sickness of the hearts became more widespread than that of the body for three reasons. Firstly, the one who suffers from such is not aware of his being ill. Secondly, its consequence is not visible in this world. This differs from the disease of the body whose end is death (which is) visible and which people naturally shun, while. what follows death is not visible. The consequence of sins is the death of the heart, which is not witnessed in this world. The shunning of sins, therefore, is rare, even though the perpetrator is aware of them. For this reason you will see him, in case of the disease of the heart, relying on Allah's generosity while striving diligently in the treatment of bodily ailment without reliance on Allah Thirdly, and this is the calamitous affliction, there is the loss of the physician. For, it is the learned who are the physicians, yet in these times they have been stricken by a sore affliction, the treatment of which is beyond their capabilities. They have found solace in the wide spread of the disease, so that their deficiency is not apparent. They have been forced to mislead the people instructing them in a manner bound to compound their illness. For the destructive affliction is the love for this world. This disease has overcome the doctors. They are, therefore, incapable of cautioning the people against it, for they fear they would be told: "How do you prescribe treatment (to others), while forgetting yourselves? For this reason the affliction spread throughout the people, the plague grew, remedy has run out, and, because of the loss of the physicians, the people have perished. Nay, the physicians have engaged in various kinds of misleading. Would that they did not cure, at least they would not aggravate the malady. Would they only remain silent, for when they speak, they care in their sermons only about what may please the masses or win their hearts. They

succeed in that only through demoting fear and promoting hope, and speaking of the signs of (divine) mercy, because that is more pleasant to the ear and easier on the tempers. The people, then, leave the exhortatory sessions further emboldened to sin and with greater trust in divine generosity.

Whenever the physician is ignorant or perfidious he destroys with the remedy as he applies it in the wrong place. Hope and fear are two remedies, but for two persons of opposing symptoms. One who was overcome with fear, to the point that he completely renounced the world and charged himself beyond endurance, made his life totally miserable, the severity of his intemperance in fear is broken by talking about the reasons for hope, so that he might return to a proper balance. Likewise, one who persists in sin, yet though desirous of repentance, is held back because of despondency and despair, thinking his previous sins too great, is also treated by the reasons for hope, so that he may aspire to the acceptance of repentance, and finally repent.

On the other hand, treating the deluded, who is devoted to sin, by speaking about the reasons of hope, resembles treating with honey the patient who developed a higher fever. That is the practice of the ignorant and the fools. It is the corruption of the physicians, therefore, that is the real problem, totally beyond cure.

You might say: Speak of the way which the preacher should follow in admonishing the people.

Know, that this is an involved and protracted matter. Yet certainly, we will indicate the types beneficial in breaking down persistence in sin, and inducing people to renounce sin. These are of four types.

The first is that men should mention those verses of the Qur'an which strike fear in sinners and rebels, as also (similar passages) from the traditions going back to the Prophet and sayings of the Companions . Such, for example, as this statement of the Prophet: "Dawn does not rise on any day nor does twilight disappear any night but that two angels echo in four voices. One says: "Would only that these creatures had not been created." The other ways: "Since they were created would they know what they were created for." The first says: "Would that, since they learned not why they were created, they acted as they were taught."° (In some versions: "Would that they sit together and discuss what they learned). Finally, the last voice says: "Since they do not act as they were taught, would that they repent their deeds."

One of the old masters said: "When a man sins the Master of the Right orders the Master of the Left, who is in charge of that man, to hold back the pen (about the man) for six hours. If the man repents and seeks forgiveness, the sin is not recorded against him. If, however, he does not seek forgiveness, it is recorded."

Another of the old masters said: "Whenever a man transgresses, his place upon earth seeks permission to swallow him, and his roof seeks leave, from the heavens, to fall onto him in fragments But Allah says to the heaven and earth: "Desist from my servant and grant him respite. You did not create him, and if you did you would be compassionate towards him; perhaps he will turn to Me

and I will forgive him; perhaps he will change to righteousness, and I will change his sin for him into pious deeds." That is the meaning of the verse: Allah holds the heavens and the earth, lest they remove: did they remove, none would hold them after him."

The tradition of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab: "The seal is attached to the foot of the Throne. When the sacred is violated, and the forbidden permitted, Allah sends the seal and it is impressed upon the hearts and their contents." In the tradition of Mujahid: "The heart is like the open palm. Whenever man sins, a finger contracts until all the fingers contract and the heart is obstructed. That is the sealing.' Hassan said: "Between man and Allah stands a certain boundary of sin. When man reaches it, Allah seals his heart, and afterward no longer promotes him towards good fate."

The traditions of the Prophet and the sayings of the Companions on the censure of transgression and the praise of the repentant are innumerable. The preacher should draw from them constantly if he is the heart to Allah's Apostle. The Prophet bequeathed no dinars or Dirhams but knowledge and wisdom which the scholar inherits according to the measure of his attainment.

The second type is the stories of the prophets and the righteous forebears and what misfortunes befell them because of their sins. Such have a strong impact, and are of manifest benefit to the hearts of men. For example, the story of Adam in his rebellion and banishment from Paradise. It is related that when he ate of the tree, the garments vanished from his body and he was left naked. The crown and the diadem were so embarrassed that they sought to disappear from him. Gabriel then came to him, took the crown from his head and loosened the diadem from his forehead. It was announced from above the throne: "Descend (Adam and Eve) from My Presence! One who has transgressed against Me cannot be close to Me!' Adam turned to Eve weeping, and said: "This is the first misfortune of the transgression, we have been removed from the presence of the Beloved."

It is related that when Solomon was punished for his error, because of the idol which was worshipped in his home (for) forty days, - (It is said: because a woman asked him to give judgement in favour of her father and he said yes but did not do so; or, that because of his attitude toward her he wished in his heart that the judgement be for her father against his opponent.) - his kingdom was taken away for forty days. He fled, forlorn. He would beg, with palm out, but would not be fed. If he said: "Feed me, for I am Solomon, son of David', he was taken up, driven off and beaten. It is told that he asked for food from a woman's household. She, however, chased him away and spat in his face. Another version says: An old woman brought out a jar containing urine and emptied it on his head. (All this happened) until, after the end of the fortieth day of chastisement, Allah dislodged the seal ring from the belly of the whale, and Solomon put it on The birds then came and perched on his head. The jinn, devils and beasts also came and assembled round him. Some of those who had offended him apologized. Solomon said: 'I do not blame you for what you have done before, nor do I praise you for your excuse now. Indeed, this affair was (ordained) in the

heavens and was inevitable It is related in the Israelites that a man married a woman from another town, then sent his servant to bring her to him. She sought to tempt and seduce him. He, however, fought her and resisted the temptation. Allah made him a prophet. for the blessing of his piety, and he became a prophet among the children of Israel. In the stories of Moses (it is reported) that he said to Al-.Khadir: "For what deed has Allah revealed to you knowledge of the Hidden?' It is related that the wind was carrying Solomon, and he glanced at his gown, and it was new. He seemed to like it. The wind put him down. He said (to the wind): "Why did you do this though I did not order you?' It said: "But we obey you only when you obey Allah."

It is also related that Allah communicated to Jacob: "Do you know why I have separated you from your child Joseph? He said no.Allah said : because you told his brothers: I fear the wolf may eat him, while you are heedless of him. Why did you fear the wolf and not appeal to Me? Why did you consider his brothers' heedlessness, and not consider My guarding him? Do you know why I returned him to you?" Jacob replied: "No!" Allah said: "Because you appealed to Me and said: haply Allah will bring them all to me and because you also said: depart, my sons, and search out tidings of Joseph and his brother. Do not despair (of Allah's comfort)." Thus, also, when Joseph said to the king's attendant: "mention me in thy lord's presence,' Allah said: Satan caused him to forget to mention him to his master, so that he continued in the prison for certain years Such stories are innumerable. The Qur'an and traditions have not adduced these just for evening entertainment. Rather, their object is contemptation and pondering so that you may learn that even the prophets are not forgiven their minor sins. How, then, can others be forgiven major sins? Certainly, they were fortunate that they were swiftly overcome with punishment in this. world, so that it was not put off to the hereafter. The wretched, however, are those given time to increase their misdeeds, for the chastisement of the hereafter is graver and greater. These kinds of stories should also be told, frequently, to those persisting in sin; for it is effective in stimulating the urge for repentance.

The third type is that the preacher should make them realize that one may expect that chastisement for sins is to be expedited in this world, and that the afflictions of man come as a result of his offenses. Many a man, however, is indulgent in the matter of the hereafter, and, because of his ignorance, fears more Allah's punishment in this world. It is necessary, therefore, to frighten him therewith. In most cases, the chastisement for all the sins (of a person) is expedited in this world, as is related in the story of David and Solomon. Because of his sins a man may become poor, his rank among people may decline, and he may fall into the hands of his enemies. The Prophet said: "Indeed, a man is deprived of sustenance on account of a sin he commits.' Ibn Mas'ud, "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I reckon that a man forgets knowledge through a sin he commits, and this is the meaning of the Prophet's word: "One who perpetrates a sin, intelligence withdraws from him, *and* never returns." An old master said: "The curse is not the black face or loss of wealth; nay, the curse is that you disengage yourself from a sin only to fall into another which is like it or. worse.' It

is as he said, for the curse is expulsion and alienation. Unless he is assisted toward the good, evil comes easily to him, and he is removed (from the divine grace). To be without divine assistance toward success (in acting righteously) is the greatest deprivation. Each sin invites another and it is compounded. Man is then deprived thereby of the beneficial nourishment of social intercourse with the learned who rebuke sin, and with the righteous; nay, he is detested by Allah so that the righteous may detest him.

It is related about one of the Gnostics that he was walking in mud, holding his clothes, wary of his foot slipping, but he slipped and fell. He got up and was walking in the middle of the mire, crying and saying: "This is the image of man. Continuously he is wary of sins and avoids them until he tumbles into one and, then, two, after which he plunges into sinning.' This is an allusion that the punishment of sin is expedited by the drift into another sin. That is why Fudail said: 'That which you have blamed on the vicissitude of time and the brutishness of brethren, is the result of your sins.' Somebody said: "I certainly recognize the punishment for my sin in the ill nature of my ass.' Another said: "I recognize the punishment even in a mouse in my house.' One of the Syrian Sufis said: 'I noticed a Christian lad of handsome countenance. I stopped and stared at him. Then, Ibn Al-Jalla' ad-Dimashqi passed me. He seized hold of my hand, and I felt embarrassed before him. I said: " O Abu Abdullah! By Almighty Allah, I was amazed by this beautiful form and this masterful piece of workmanship and (by) how it was created for hellfire!" He squeezed my hand and said: "You shall encounter the punishment (for this staring) after awhile." ' The Syrian said: "I was punished for it thirty years later.' Abu Sulaiman ad-Darani said: "Sexual maturation is a punishment,' and `no one misses the communal prayer except through the commission of sin.' In a tradition (it is said): "What you blame on your time is really due to your deeds which are corrupt." A tradition: "Allah says: "The least that I shall do to a man, if he prefers his craving to obedience to Me, is that I shall deprive him of the delight of My discourse."" It is told of Abu 'Amr Ibn Al-Ala', in a story that would take too long, that he said: "One day, as I was standing in prayer, my heart was seized by desire. It continued in my mind until a craving of men was born from it. I fell to the ground, and my entire body turned black. I hid myself at home, and did not emerge for three days. I was purging my body with soap, in the bath. The blackness, however, was only compounded, until, after three nights, it was undone. I then encountered Al-Junaid who had sent for me, summoning me from Ar-Riqa. When I came to him he said to me: "Were you not ashamed before Allah? I stood before Him but then your soul concealed a craving until it tenderly overpowered you and removed you from before Allah. Had I not prayed to Allah for you and turned to Him in repentance on your behalf, surely you would have met Allah with that colour." I wondered how he knew of that, for he was in Baghdad while I was in Ar-Riqa."

Know, that whenever man sins be blackens the face of his heart. If he is happy, the blackness becomes apparent upon his exterior so as to rebuke him. If he is wretched, it is concealed from him, until be becomes engrossed in sin and

liable to hellfire. There are numerous traditions concerning the injurious (consequences) of sin in this world, such as poverty, sickness, et cetera. But the calamity of sin; in this world, in general, is that man acquires following it another sin. If he is tempted by a thing, it becomes a punishment, and he is deprived of sustenance to compound his wretchedness. Even if bounty comes his way to win him over, he is denied the feeling of gratitude, so that he is punished for his ingratitude. But in the case of the obedient, it is part of the blessing of his obedience that any bounty, for him, is a reward for his obedience and he is divinely assisted toward gratitude for it; while each tribulation becomes an atonement for his sins, and adds, thereby, to his stature.

The fourth type is (for the preacher) to talk of the punishments that befell individual sins such as wine imbibing, fornication, theft, murder, slander, arrogance and envy. These sins are innumerable. To talk of them to the wrong people, is like applying the remedy to the wrong spot. The learned should be like the skilled physician, diagnosing first, by the pulse, the external appearance and the reflexes, the internal maladies and, then, engaging in their treatment. By concatenation of circumstances he infers the hidden qualities. In facing what he has learned let him emulate Allah's Apostle. When someone said to the Prophet "peace be upon him": " O Apostle of Allah, counsel me but do not overburden me!', the Prophet said: 'Do not be angry." Another man asked the Prophet: " Apostle of Allah, counsel me." The Prophet said: "You must renounce (the aspiration) for other people's wealth. Indeed, such is (true) wealth. Beware of greed, it is the ever-present poverty. Pray a final prayer." Beware of what one has to apologize for." A man said to Muhammad Ibn Wasi': "Counsel me!' He said: "I advise you to be an angel in this world and the next!' The man asked: "How do I (achieve) that?' He said: "Practice asceticism."

It seems that the Prophet discerned, in the first questioner, the signs of anger, and restrained him therefrom. In the second questioner he discerned the signs of greed and perseverance in this expectation of the wealth of others. Muhammad Ibn Wasi' discerned in his petitioner, the signs of preoccupation with this world.

A man said to Mu'adh: "Counsel me!' He said: "Be merciful, and I will guarantee you Paradise.' Apparently he detected in the man traces of coarseness and harshness.

A man said to Ibrahim Ibn 'Adham: "Counsel me!' He said: 'Be careful about people! You need people, and must be with others. Men are human. But not all men are human. Gone are the human beings *(rids)* what remains is the monkey. I do not consider them as people, nay, they have plunged into the water of despair." It seems, then, as if Ibn Adham discerned in him the damage of (excessive) association, and pointed to what was prevailing in his situation, at the time. That was his injury (of or by) others. It is more proper that a statement should fit the state of the questioner, rather than that of the speaker.

Mu'awiyah wrote to 'A'ishah: "Write me a letter, giving me therein counsel but make it brief.' She wrote to him: 'From 'A'ishah to Mu'awiyah, peace be upon

you! I heard the Apostle of Allah say: "One who seeks Allah's pleasure through men's displeasure, Allah protects him from the trouble of men, and one who seeks Allah's displeasure through men's pleasure, Allah puts him in charge of men." Farewell!" Consider her cleverness in how she ventured upon the bane that confronts rulers, namely, the control over men versus the desire to please them. She wrote him on another occasion: 'Fear God! If you fear Allah, He will protect you from men. If, however, you fear men, they will not avail you against Allah. Farewell!"

Therefore, it should be the concern of every counselor to detect the hidden qualities and discern the appropriate conditions, so that he might deal with the significant. To narrate all the spiritual exhortations in the individual cases is impossible, and, to engage in preaching on what does not call for preaching is a waste of time.

You might say: If the preacher is speaking to an assembly, or is asked for counsel by someone with whose inner state he is unfamiliar, how is he to act?

The path for him, in such a case, is to preach that which is of universal application, generally or mostly. For in the religious studies there are nutriments and remedies. The nutriments are for all, and the remedies are for the sick.

A case in point is what is related of a man who said to Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri: "Counsel me!' He replied: "You must fear Allah, it is the beginning of all good. You must exert yourself in *jihad,* it is the monasticism of Islam. You must read the Qur'an, it is an illumination for you among the earthly host and a remembrance for you among the heavenly host. You must be silent, except for the good. Thus you will triumph over Satan."

Also, a man said to Hassan: "Counsel me!' He said: "Honour Allah's command and He will honour you."

Luqman said to his son: "My son, join the throng around the scholars, but do not dispute with them lest they hate you. Take from this world your subsistence, and spend the rest of your acquisitions for your hereafter. Do not reject this world totally lest you be a burden to and dependent upon others. Fast, so as to curb your craving but not so as to damage your prayer. For prayer is superior to fasting. Do not keep the company of the foolish, and do not associate with the two-faced.' He also said: 'My son, do not laugh without amazement; do not proceed without aim; do not ask of what is of no concern to you; do not squander your wealth to promote the property of another. For your stock is that which you prepared (of good deeds) ahead of time, and the stock of others is that which you leave (to others). My son, one who is compassionate is treated with compassion; one who is silent is safe; he whose word is good gains, he whose word is evil sins, and he who does not master his tongue regrets."

A man said to Abu Hazim: "Counsel me!' He said: "Adhere to that which you would consider precious when facing death; avoid that which you would consider a misfortune when facing death."

Moses said to Al-Khadir: "Counsel me!' Al-Khadir said: "Be benign and be

not angry; be useful, not harmful; eschew obstinacy; go not without need; and do not laugh without wonderment. Son of 'Imran, do not scold sinners for their errors, cry over your own."

A man said to Muhammad Ibn Karram: "Counsel me!' Ibn Karram said: "Strive to please thy Creator in the same measure as you seek your own satisfaction."

A man said to Hamid Al-Laffaf: "Counsel me!' He said: "Make for your religion a cover like the cover on the Qur'an, lest it should get soiled by troubles.' The man asked: "What is the cover of religion?' He said: "Renouncing worldly pursuit except for the minimum; abstention from talking much unless it is necessary; reducing social intercourse to a minimum.

Hassan (al-Basri) wrote to 'Umar Ibn 'Abd Al-'Aziz saying: "Fear that which Allah has alarmed you about, be cautious of that which Allah has cautioned you about, and take from what is in your hands to what is ahead of you. At the time of death the ultimate message shall reach you. Farewell!"

'Umar Ibn 'Abd Al-'Aziz wrote to Hassan asking for his admonition. Hassan replied: "The greatest terror and the horrors are ahead of you, and you cannot escape from witnessing them, be either in salvation or perdition. Know, that he who takes his soul to account gains, and he who is negligent of his soul loses. He who contemplates the consequences is saved, but he who follows his mood errs. He who is meek gains; he who fears is safe; he who is safe learns by example; he who learns by example gains insight; he who has insight understands, and he who understands knows. If you have slipped, return. If you have regret, uproot (the evil). If you are ignorant, ask. And, if you are angered, forbear."

Mutarrif Ibn 'Abdullah wrote to 'Umar Ibn 'Abd-Al-Aziz: "This world is an abode of punishment. For it the senseless are gathering (goods) and, by it one who has no knowledge is deluded. Commander of the Faithful! Be in it like one whose injury is treated, enduring the severity of the remedy for fear of the consequences of the disease."

'Umar also wrote to 'Adi Ibn Arta'ah saying: "This world is an enemy of Allah's friends and of Allah's enemies. It distresses His friends, and deludes His enemies.' He also wrote to one of his governors: "You have the power to oppress people. If you intend to wrong one, remember Allah's power over you. Know that if you cause any trouble to the people, the responsibility remains yours. Know, also, that Allah takes to account the oppressors on account of the oppressed. Farewell!"

This is how the admonition should be - for the masses or when the preacher does not know the specifics of the case. These exhortations are like the nutriments by which all the people can benefit. But, because of the lack of such as these preachers, the gate of learning from admonition is barred, sins predominate, and decay proceeds apace. The people are afflicted with preachers who parade rhymed prose and recite verses, take upon themselves to talk of that which is beyond the range of their knowledge, and imitate others. The masses lost their respect for the preacher. The preacher's words do not emanate from the

heart so as to reach the heart. Rather, the speaker is arrogant, the listener burdened, and each of them is slipping and failing.

Seeking a physician, therefore, is the start of the treatment for the sick, and seeking the learned, is the beginning of treatment for sinners. This is one of the pillars and principles of treatment.

The second principle is forbearance *(Sabr).* The point of the need for forbearance is that the patient's illness is prolonged because he takes what is harmful to him. He consumes that, either because he is unaware that it is harmful, or because of the intensity of his craving. Such action has two causes. What we have mentioned is the treatment for the unawareness. There remains, then, the treatment of craving, but we have already discussed the method of its treatment in the Book of the Discipline of the Soul The gist of it is that, when his voracity for a harmful food becomes intense, the patient will perceive the magnitude of its harm. Then he should remove that from his scope of vision and not keep it. Then he will seek to distract himself from it with something which approximates it in form but not in virulence. Then, by virtue of fear, he should overcome the pain caused by abstention. Under all conditions, the bitterness of forbearance is inevitable, and thus he will treat the craving for transgression.

A young man, for example, when desire overcomes him, becomes incapable of controlling his eye, heart or limbs in the pursuit of his desire. .He must realize the harm of his sin by examining the relevant fearful passages in the Qur'an and in the Tradition. When his dread is intensified, he keeps his distance from the factors inciting his drive.

The external stimulant of desire is the presence of the object of desire and gazing at it. The treatment is flight and isolation. The internal stimulant is the consumption of delicious foods. Its treatment lies in hunger and prolonged fasting. All this can be achieved only through forbearance. One shows forbearance, however, only from fear, but one fears only from knowledge, and, one gains knowledge only from insight and reflection or from listening and emulation. The first order of business, then, is attendance at invocation assemblies *(Dhikr);* then, listening, with a heart devoid of other engagements, devoted to attention; then reflection on it unto perfect understanding. Thereupon fear will certainly be aroused. With fear rising, forbearance will be facilitated, and the requisites of seeking treatment will develop. Behind that lie divine assistance toward success and divine facilitation.

One who gives, of his heart, proper attention, perceives the dread (of sin) and fear of Allah, expects recompense and confirms the reward most fair , Allah eases him to easing but as for him who is a miser and self-sufficient and cries lies to the reward most fair, Allah will ease him to the hardship only the clarification of the paths of guidance falls upon the prophets. Yet, To Allah belongs the first and the last , You might assert: The entire matter reverts then to (a question of) faith, because renunciation of sin is impossible without forbearance; forbearance is possible only through the experience of fear; fear sets in only through knowledge; knowledge is attained solely through confirming (the belief in) the magnitude of

injury caused by sins, and confirmation of the magnitude of sins' harm is confirmation of the belief in Allah and His Apostle, which is faith. It appears, then, that one who persists in sin does so only because he is not a believer.

Know, that this persistence is not due to the loss of faith but rather to its weakness, inasmuch as every believer believes firmly that transgression is a cause of alienation from Allah, and is the cause of punishment in the hereafter. The reason, however, for his falling into sin is manifold.

Firstly, the promised punishment is concealed and not in (immediate) attendance. The soul is predisposed to being influenced by what is at hand. The effect upon the soul of the promised chastisement is weak compared to the impact of that which is present.

Secondly, the gratification of the cravings leading to sin are consummate and they immediately grab the throat. Because of habituation and custom, - habit serving as the fifth element - (this pressure) is vigorous and overpowers the soul. The soul finds it hard to shift from the immediate to the fear of the future. That is why it says: no indeed; but you love the hasty world and leave be the hereafter, and, nay, but you prefer the present life The Prophet expressed how difficult this is in his sayings: "Paradise is encircled by adversities, and hellfire by cravings'; a `God created hellfire. Then He said to Gabriel: Go and look at it. He looked at it, then said: By Your Glory! No one who hears of it shall enter it. Allah then encircled it with the desires, then said again: Go look at it. He looked at it and said: By Your Glory! I am afraid that none shall remain who will not enter it. Allah created Paradise. He said to Gabriel: Go and look at it. He did, and said: By Your might! Everyone who hears will (seek) to enter it. Allah then surrounded it with adversities and said: Go and look at it. He did, and said: By Your might! I am afraid that none shall enter." Thus the immediate oppressiveness of the desires, and the relegation of punishment into the future are two obvious causes in the self abandon despite the presence of the basic faith. Nobody who, while sick and because of his thirst, drinks ice water denies, thereby, the basis of medicine. Nor does he deny the fact that ice water is harmful for him. But the craving overcomes him, and the pain of desisting is supreme, so that the anticipated pain seems minimized.

Thirdly, every believing sinner is, generally, determined to repent and to atone the evil through pious deeds. Further, it has been promised that such will restore him. Continued hope, however, prevails over the natural dispositions, and man keeps postponing repentance and atonement. Yet, since his hope is for divine help towards success in repentance, he may often proceed despite faith toward sin.

Fourthly, every convinced believer maintains that sins do not necessitate chastisement to the extent of precluding forgiveness. He sins, therefore, and anticipates forgiveness trusting in Allah's generosity.

These are four causes that lead to persistence in sin, despite the survival of the basic faith.

Certainly, the sinner might come up with a fifth reason, that impairs that basic faith. Namely, he may doubt the authenticity of the prophets. This is unbelief. He

is like the one whom the physician cautioned about consuming what would, in his ill state, harm him. If the man cautioned does not consider the warner a medical authority, the patient may deny or doubt the physician. He will, therefore, pay no attention to the doctor. But such is unbelief.

You might say: What, then, is the treatment for the five causes? I say that it is reflection (Fikr).

That is that man persuade himself in the first instance, i.e., the relegation of punishment, that everything that is to come, is (truly). coming; that, for those who watch, the morrow is nigh, and that death is closer to everyone than his shoe lace; what shall make him know, perhaps the Hour is nigh, and when that which has been put off takes place it is merely the consummation of the prophetic message. He should remind himself that, in this world, he is weary forever for fear of something in the future. Thus, a man travels overseas and undergoes hardship of journeys for the sake of gain which he thinks he might need at another time. Yet if he falls ill, and a Christian physician tells him that drinking cold water will harm him and lead to his death, and cold water is, to his mind, the most delicious of things, he abandons drinking it, despite the fact that the pain of death is only of an instant, if he did not fear what follows it, and departure from this world is (anyhow) inescapable.

Yet what is the proportion between his existence in this world to his absence for ever and ever! Let him consider how quickly he is going to abandon his pleasures at the instruction of a non-Muslim with no miracle to support his medicine. Then he will say: "How does it befit my intelligence that the word of the prophets, supported by miracles, should be inferior in my eyes to that of a Christian who claims (the knowledge of) medicine without any (supporting) miracle and without any confirmation except by the common folk? How can the torment of hellfire be less, to me, than the torment of disease, when each day in the hereafter is like fifty thousand years of this world?"

Through this same contemplation he treats the delight which is overcoming him. He will force himself to abandon it by saying: "If I am unable to renounce my delights during the days of my life which are few, how, then, shall I ever be able to do so? If I am not able to endure the pain of forbearance, how, then, could I withstand the pain of hellfire? If I am unable to renounce the vanities of this world despite its vexations, disturbances, and the blend of its delight and grief, how can I forgo the bliss of the hereafter?

As for postponement of repentance, he can treat it by reflection on (the fact) that most of the anguish of the people of hellfire stems from procrastination, as the procrastinator builds on what is not his, namely immortality. Yet perhaps he will not survive, and, if he survives, he may be unable to desist tomorrow, just as he is unable to abstain today. I wish I knew; did he not fail, in the present, only because of the triumph of craving, which craving is not going to leave him on the morrow, but rather is compounded since it is reinforced through habituation. Now, the craving which a man reinforced by habit is not like the one which he did not reinforce. Because of this the procrastinators perish, for they suppose there is a difference between things identical. They do not realize that all days are

similar in that forgoing cravings is always painful, on any day.

A fitting analogy is: one who needs to uproot a tree but sees that it is strong and will not be extirpated except with great difficulty. He says: "I will put it off for a year and then come back to it.' But he knows that the longer the tree survives, the more its deep-rootedness increases, while the older he gets the more he becomes weak. There is, then, no stupidity grosser than his in the world: when he, in his prime, fails to stand up to the weak, and begins to anticipate triumph over the rival while he himself is getting weak and the weak one is getting strong.

As for the fourth idea, i.e., the expectation of Allah's forgiveness, its treatment is as above. The man is like one who dissipates all his property, leaving himself and his family paupers, expecting that Allah, in His generosity, will provide for him the discovery of a treasure amidst ruins. The possibility of forgiveness of sins (in such a manner) is like this possibility. He is like one who fears spoliation at the hand of oppressors in his country, and (yet), he leaves his treasures in the courtyard of his home. He was able to bury and hide them but did not do so. He said: "I look to Allah's generosity, it may bring either inadvertence or distress upon the pillaging tyrant so that he will miss my home, or, when he turns to my home he will be struck down at the gate! Both death and inadvertence are possible. Such things occur in fictional stories, and I anticipate the like from divine kindness.' One who anticipates this, anticipates the possible. Yet he is extremely silly and ignorant. For it may not happen and not be so.

As for the fifth cause, i.e., doubt, this is unbelief. It is to be treated with those elements which would make him learn the veracity of the prophets. But this would take long. It is possible, however, to treat it with simple knowledge which would befit the bounds of his intelligence. He should be asked: "Is the truth of what the prophets said, supported as they are by miracles, possible? Or, do you maintain that you know that it is impossible, in the same manner as you know the impossibility of one person being in two places at the same time?' If he says: "I know that it is as impossible as the latter,' then he is stupid and idiotic. It would seem that such creatures do not exist among sensible people. But if he said: "I am in doubt about it,' then let him be asked: "If some unknown person were to tell you, as you were leaving your meal at home for an instant, that a viper had licked it, and put its poison in it, and you could admit his truthfulness, would you then eat the meal or, even be it the most delicious of foods, would you forgo it?' He would answer: "I would most certainly leave it. I would say: if he has lied, I shall merely miss this food. To forgo it may be hard but sensible. If, on the other hand, he was right, I might lose my life. Compared to the discomfort of abstention from food and its waste, death is harsher.' Say to him then: 'By Almighty Allah, how can you defer the truth of all the prophets, despite all their miracles, and the veracity of all the saints, scholars and sages, nay, of all categories of sensible people - I do not mean thereby the ignorant of the masses but rather those possessed of intellect - in favour of the truth of one unknown man who may have some purpose of his

own?"

All reasonable men believe in the Last Day and acknowledge reward and punishment, even if they differ as to particulars. If they are right, you are on the brink of a chastisement which is to continue forever. If, on the other hand, they are wrong, you miss nothing save some cravings of this passing and vexatious world. There can remain no hesitation for him, if he is intelligent, following this reflection, for there is no comparison between a lifetime and eternity Nay, were we to presume that the world is filled with a speck, and that a bird gathers, every million years, one granule of it, still surely the speck would come to an end, and eternity would not be diminished at all. How could a sensible man's mind waver about forgoing desires for say, a hundred years, for the sake of bliss eternal? That is why Abu -'Ala' Ahmad Ibn Sulaiman at-Tanukhi Al-Ma'arri said: The astrologer and physician both of them Deny the resurrection of the body. I said: "Oh, get you gone. If this is your belief, upon you perdition falls, not upon me Therefore." 'Ali said to one whose intelligence fell short of true understanding and was a doubter: "If what I said is correct, we will all be saved; if not, I am saved and you perish.' That is to say, the sensible man follows the path of safety in all situations.

You might ask: These matters are evident but they are attained only through reflection. But what about the hearts? They give up reflection about these matters, and consider (them) too burdensome. What is the treatment for the hearts by which to return them to reflection, especially in the case of a man who believes in the basis and ramification of religion?

Know, then, that the impediment to reflection is twofold. Firstly, functional reflection is the reflection of the punishment of the hereafter, its terrors and afflictions, the grief of sinners over their exclusion from the everlasting bliss. This reflection is stinging and painful to the heart. The heart, therefore, shuns it, and takes delight in reflecting on worldly matters for comfort and relaxation. Secondly, reflection is an immediate impediment distracting from the worldly delights and the gratification of cravings. Every man, in every state and with every breath, has a craving which overtakes him and enslaves him. His intellect then becomes subservient to his craving. Therefore, man is busy to set his ruse (to gratify it), and it becomes his delight to pursue the ruse, or to start the gratification of his craving. But reflection holds him back from that.

To treat these two obstructions, he should say to his heart: "How great is your foolishness in being wary of reflecting on death and what follows it, because of the pain caused by the mention of death, despite the disdain for the pain of struggling with death. How will you endure sustaining it, whenever it happens, seeing that (at the same tune), you are unable to endure the very admission of death and what follows it, and are pained thereby? To treat the second impediment, i.e., that reflection makes you miss worldly pleasures that are graver and more decisive. For, pleasures of the hereafter are infinite and unmarred, while the worldly pleasure are quickly obliterated and are mixed with vexations. In this life there is no pleasure free of worry. (The more so) as in repenting of transgressions and in concern for obedience lies delight in

conferring with Allah, repose in perceiving and obeying Him and constant closeness to Him. If the obedient had no other recompense for his deeds than what he feels of the sweetness of obedience and the spirit of intimacy in converse with Allah, that would surely be sufficient. The more so, when to this is added the bliss of the hereafter. Certainly, this pleasure does not occur at the initial stage of repentance, but after man endures (in repentance) for a long time, the good having become habit as before the evil was. The soul is receptive - as you train it, so it becomes habituated. Good is habit, and evil is (sheer) obstinacy.

These reflections, therefore, induce fear which in turn induces the ability to forgo pleasures. The stimulant of these reflections is exhortation of the preachers, and admonitions which penetrate into the heart through innumerable appropriate motifs. Reflection then becomes consonant with temper, and the heart tends toward it. The cause which projects harmony between the temper and the reflection, which (itself) is the cause of goodness, is termed succor *(twain),* inasmuch as succor is the fusion of will and the faculty which is obedience useful unto the hereafter.

It is related in a long Hadith that Ammar Ibn Yasir "Allah be pleased with him" arose and said to Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him": "O Commander of Believers! Tell us about disbelief. Upon what is it built?" Ali "Allah be pleased with him" answered: "It is built upon four props: rudeness, blindness, heedlessness and doubt. The one who is rude scorns the truth, proclaims the false and hates the learned; and the One who is blind forgets the invocation (of Allah's name); and the one who is heedless swerves from good sense; and the one who doubts, the desires mislead him, then, only to be seized by sighing and regret, and what he was not considering (possible) concerning Allah appears to him now."

What we have mentioned explains some of the damages wrought by neglect of reflection. So much for (the discussion of) repentance.

If forbearance is one of the pillars of continued repentance, it is imperative to explain it. We will, therefore, discuss it, Allah willing, in a separate treatise.

Book two: Patience and gratitude

It is the second book of the quarter of saviors

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah, Who is fitting for praise and thanks, Whose Alone is the garment of Grandeur, and the attributes of Glory and Supremacy, Who supports his selected friends and allies with the power of patience at the times of ease and adversity, and gratitude for distress and blessing.

Allah's permanent and ceaseless blessing and peace be upon Muhammad, the chief of all the Prophets and Messengers, his companions, the chiefs of the selected allies and friends of Allah, and his family, the leaders of the pious and righteous.

Coming to the point: faith consists of two halves: patience and gratitude, in accordance with the Prophetic narrations and sayings of the righteous predecessors. Both are among the attributes and Most Beautiful Names of Allah Almighty, Who names Himself the Patient, and the Thankful. The ignorance of the real nature of both is indeed ignorance of both halves of faith, and heedlessness of two of the attributes of (Allah) Most Gracious. To be sure, there is no way to be close to Allah Almighty without faith. How could it be imagined to follow the path of faith without knowing the components and object of faith? However, to fail to know both patience and gratitude is to fail to know the components and object of faith. This is why there is dire need to clarify the real nature of both halves. We are going to clarify both halves in one book, Allah willing, for they are interconnected.

Part one: Patience

It consists of seven chapters, which go as follows:

Explication Of Merit Of Patience

Explication Of Its Definition And Real Nature

Explication Of The Fact That It Constitutes Half The Faith

Explication Of The Fact That Its Names Differ By The Difference Of Its Appurtenances

Explication Of Its categories In Regard To Strength And Weakness

Explication Of The Dire Need For Patience

Explication Of Medicine Of Patience; And That Whose Aid Is Sought To Support It

CHAPTER ONE
EXPLICATION OF MERIT OF PATIENCE

Allah Almighty described the patient with many good characteristics, and referred to patience more than seventy two times in the Qur'an, and assigned the greater portion of degrees (of felicity) and good to the patience, as being its fruit.

He Almighty said: " And We appointed, from among them, Leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, so long as they persevered with patience and continued to have faith in Our Signs." (As-Sajdah 24)

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

And: " The fair promise of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel, because they had patience and constancy." (Al-A'raf 137)

﴿ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا ﴿١٣٧﴾ ﴾

And: "And We will certainly bestow, on those who patiently persevere, their reward according to the best of their actions." (An-Nahl 96)

﴿ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ ﴾

And: " Twice will they be given their reward, for that they have persevered." (Al-Qasas 54)

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

And: " those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!" (Az-Zumar 10)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

There is no act of worship but that its reward is measured barring patience, whose reward is immeasurable. Since fasting implies patience, and constitutes its half, Allah Almighty says about it (as narrated by His Prophet): "Fasting is for Me for which I give reward." From among all acts of worship, He ascribed fasting to Himself. He promised the patient that He would be with them, saying: " and be patient and persevering: for Allah is with those who patiently persevere." (Al-Anfal 46)

﴿ وَاصْبِرُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾

He Almighty suspended victory on patience, saying (addressing the faithful believers): "Yea, if you remain firm, and act aright, even if the enemy should rush here on you in hot haste, your Lord would help you with five thousand angels making a terrific onslaught." (Al Imran 125)

﴿ بَلَىٰ ۚ إِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُم
بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ ﴾

He combined for the patient many good things which have never been combined for anyone else, as shown from His statement: " They are those on whom (descend) blessings from their Lord, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance." (Al-Baqarah 157)

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ ﴾

Consider how right guidance, blessing and mercy (of Allah) have been combined only for the patient! However, it will be too lengthy to relate all the Holy Verses regarding patience.

There are many Prophetic narrations as regards patience, of which a mention

may be made of the following:

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Patience constitutes half the faith" as we will explain its meaning in detail later. (Abu Na'im and Al-Khatib on the authority fo Ibn Mas'ud). He "peace be upon him" further said: "You have been given the least portion of certainty (of faith) and determination of patience. Whoever is given his fortune of them (in full), should not care about what he has missed of standing at night (for supererogatory prayers) and fasting by day. It is dearer to me to keep patient on your state on which you are, than to come to me, with each of you having (as much) work as the work of all of you. But I fear most that this world would be opened to you, with the result that you would deny each other, and at that point, you would be denied by the hosts of heaven. Whoever keeps patient and expects his reward for that (from Allah), would receive his reward in full." Then, he "peace be upon him" recited: " What is with you must vanish: what is with Allah will endure. And We will certainly bestow, on those who patiently persevere, their reward according to the best of their actions." (An-Nahl 96)

﴿ مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ ۖ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوٓا۟ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about faith, thereupon he said: "It consists of patience and tolerance." (Ibn Hibban and At-Tabarani). He "peace be upon him" further said: "Patience is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise." He "peace be upon him" was asked once again: "What is faith?" he said: "Patience." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority fo Anas). It resembles his statement: "Hajj is (to stand at) Arafah." (the composers of sunan on the authority fo Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Ya'mur). It means that the greatest part of Hajj is fulfilled by standing at Arafah. He "peace be upon him" further said: "The best of deeds is that which souls are forced to do under compulsion (for it requires great patience)." It is said that it was revealed to David "peace be upon him": "Behave in accordance with My good manners, and one of My good manners is that I am the Patient."

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" (through Ata') that when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" entered upon the Ansar he asked them: "Are you really believers?" they kept silent. Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Yes O Messenger of Allah." He asked: "Then, what is the sign of your faith?" they said: "We thank (Allah) for comfort, keep patient on adversity, and accept (with good pleasure) the fate (decreed by Allah)." On that he said: "You are really believers, by the Lord of the Ka'bah." (At-Tabarani). He "peace be upon him" further said: "Much good lies in your keeping patient on what you dislike." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Ibn Abbas). The Christ "peace be upon him" said: "You would not attain what you like unless you keep patient on what you dislike." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Were patience to be a man, he would have been generous; and Allah likes the patient." (At-Tabarani on the authority of A'ishah). However, the Prophetic narrations in this connection are beyond calculation.

There are many sayings belonging to the righteous predecessors, and a mention may be made of the following:

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" wrote in his message to Abu Musa "Allah be pleased with him": "Adhere to patience, and know that patience is of two kinds, one of which is better than the other. To keep patient on adversities is good, but what is better is to keep patient on what has been forbidden by Allah Almighty. Know also that patience is the substance of faith, for the piety, which is the best deed of righteousness, is achieved by patience." Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Faith has been established on four sides: certainty, patience, Jihad and justice." He said on another occasion: "Patience in relation to faith is like the head in relation to the body; and as well as there is no body without a head, there is no faith without patience." Umar "Allah be pleased with him" used to say: "How good are both sides (of the camel), and how good is the extra load for the patient." By both sides, he meant prayer and mercy, and by the extra load the right guidance. By this , he referred to the statement of Allah Almighty: " They are those on whom (descend) blessings from their Lord, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance." (Al-Baqarah 157)

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ ﴾

Habib Ibn Abu Habib used to weep whenever he recited the followingHoly Verse: "Truly We found him (Job) full of patience and constancy, how excellent in Our service! ever did he turn (to Us)!" (Sad 44)

﴿ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا ۚ نِّعْمَ الْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

He used to say in comment on that: "How astonishing! He gave and praised (whom He gave)." i.e. He gives for patience, for which He praises." According to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him": "The peak of faith is patience on the judgement, and contentment with the Divine Decree."

That is an exposition of the merit of patience from the transmitted texts. As for its rational side, it would not be understood clearly unless you know well the meaning and real nature of patience. Indeed, the merit and grade are attributes which could be known only after the knowledge of the real nature of the described thing. So, let's make a mention of its real nature and meaning, and success be with Allah Almighty.

CHAPTER TWO
EXPLICATION OF REAL NATURE AND MEANING OF PATIENCE

It should be known that patience is one of the stations of religion and mystic travellers; and all stations of religion consist of three components: knowledge, states and acts. Knowledge is the origin which produces states, and the acts are the fruits of states. Knowledge is like the trees, states the branches, and acts the fruits. This is true of all the stations of the mystic travellers on the path to Allah Almighty. The term faith sometimes is given only to knowledge, and at other times to all the three elements as we have already referred to the different meanings of both faith and Islam in the book of the rules of creed.

Patience could be accomplished only on the basis of a previous knowledge and a present state. The act then is produced from that previous knowledge and present state. This could be known only if we know the order in which angels, men and animals exist. Patience is unique to men and it is unimaginable in both angels and animals, due to the deficiency of animals and perfection of angels. That is, the animals are seized by appetites, to which they are subject, and nothing stimulates or quietens them other than the appetites. They have no power to resist the appetite and repel it, so that the constancy of this power vis-à-vis the requirement of appetite might be called patience. As for angels "peace be upon them" they are devoted to longing for the presence of Lordship, and delight in the degree of nearness to it; and no power of appetite is directed on them in order to need to resist what keeps away from the presence of Lordship with other soldiers to overcome it.

As regards man, he is created as being incomplete during childhood, like animals. He has nothing but the appetite for food which he needs, then there appears in him the appetite for play and adornment, followed by the appetite for marriage. He does not have the power of patience to resist those, for patience in its real nature is to have soldiers stand steadfast in opposition to other fighting soldiers. But the child has but the soldiers of desire with nothing to oppose them, like animals. But Allah Almighty, with His mercy and generosity, honoured the sons of Adam and raised their class over that of animals. When man becomes at the threshold of attaining the age of puberty, he is entrusted to two angels: one to guide him aright, and the other to strengthen him. In this way, he is distinguished by the aid of angels from the animals. He further is given two distinctive characteristics: one is the knowledge of Allah Almighty and His Messenger, and the knowledge of the consequences resulting from acts. This is by virtue of the angel in charge of guiding and teaching. Indeed, the animal has none to guide it to know the consequences resulting from acts like man. For this reason, it requires but what is pleasant and delicious, but it is beyond its capacity to demand the beneficial, though presently bitter medicine.

Man thus, by the light of guidance, came to know that following the desires has harmful consequences. But this guidance alone is insufficient so long as he is not provided with the power to leave those harmful things. How many harmful things which man knows to be harmful, like ailment, and man has no power to avert them. Since then he has no power to avert from himself the soldiers of desire, Allah Almighty entrusted him to another angel to strengthen him and provide him with soldiers invisible to him to help him overcome the soldiers of desires. He Almighty ordered him to fight the soldiers of desire. But sometimes, this (angelic) soldier becomes weak, and at other times strong, according to the support provided by Allah for His servant, the same as the light of guidance which is different among men.

Let's give that characteristic by which man is distinguished from animals as far as curbing and overpowering desires is concerned, the name of religious motive, and give the desires' demanding to be fulfilled the name of motive of inclination. There is then fighting and war between the motive of religion and the

motive of inclination. The (matter of victory and loss in the) war between them is determined by turns. The heart is the place where the battle between them occurs. The religious motive gets its supplies from the angels who support the party of Allah Almighty; and the motive of inclination gets its supplies from Satans who support the enemies of Allah Almighty.

Patience is the constancy of the religious motive vis-à-vis the motive of inclination. If the religious motive stands steadfast until it overpowers the motive of inclination, the party of Allah then will have achieved victory, and man will have joined the patient; and if it weakens and is overpowered by desire, and has no power to keep patient until he averts it, he will have joined the followers of devils. Leaving the desired things is caused by an act resulting from a state called patience. It is the constancy of the religious motive vis-à-vis the motive of desire. The constancy of the religious motive is a state resulting from the knowledge of the enmity of desire, and its opposition to the causes of happiness in the world and hereafter.

The more one's certainty of faith is strengthened, i.e. the certainty that the desire is to cut off on him the way to Allah Almighty, the more the religious motive becomes constant; and once it becomes more constant, the acts will be done in opposition to the requirements of desires.

The desire then could be left only by the power of the religious motive which opposes the motive of desire. To be sure, the power of knowledge and faith uncovers the harm and evil consequences of desire, those two angels are in charge of those powers, by permission of Allah Almighty. They are subjugated by Him. They are among the generous scribes. They are entrusted to be in charge of all human beings.

If you know that the class of the guiding angel is higher than that of the strengthening angel, it then will not be hidden from you that the right side is nobler than the other. This angel is the companion of the right side, and the other the companion of the left side. A servant has two states of heedlessness and thinking on the one hand, and unrestraint and mortification on the other hand. By heedlessness, he turns away from and does evil to the companion of the right side, who, in turn, writes his conduct as an evil deed against him. But by thinking, he turns towards him to get benefit from his guidance, thus doing good to him, and he, in turn, writes his devotion to him as a good deed. Likewise, by unrestraint, he turns away from the companion of the left side, and does not take heed to get supplies from him, thus doing evil to him, with the result that he writes his conduct as an evil deed against him. But by mortification, he gets supplies from him, and he, in turn, writes this as a good deed for him.

For their writing good and evil deeds, these angels are called generous scribes. They are generous for the servant gets benefit from their generosity, and all angels are righteous generous. They are scribes for they record good and evil deeds. They record them in scrolls folded within the heart, in order not to be uncovered in this world. Those scrolls, their scribes, handwriting, description and all things related to them belong to the dominion of invisibles. Everything

belonging to the dominion of invisibles is beyond the reach of sights. Those folded scrolls are to be spread out twice: the first on the minor resurrection, and the other on the major resurrection. By minor resurrection, I mean the state of death, in compliance with the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Whoever dies, his judgement has been established." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Anas).In this minor resurrection, the servant is alone, and at that point, it is said: "And behold! you come to Us bare and alone as We created you for the first time: you have left behind you all (the favours) which We bestowed on you." (Al-An'am 94)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَٰدَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُم مَّا خَوَّلْنَٰكُمْ وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ ﴿٩٤﴾ ﴾

And: "Read your (own) record; sufficient is your soul this day to make out an account against you." (Al-Isra' 14)

﴿ ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

But on the major resurrection which gathers all creatures, he will not be alone: on the contrary, perhaps he will be reckoned in front of the assembly of people, where the pious will be driven to the Garden, and the disbelievers and criminals to the fire (of Hell) in crowds.

The first terror comes from the minor resurrection. All terrors of the major resurrection have matches in the minor resurrection, like the earthquake. At the time of your death, the earth that belongs to you quakes. It is known that the earthquake might befall any part of the land without the surrounding parts. What affects man by the earthquake is the tremble of his own residence and not that of others. You should know that you are created from dust, and your portion from the dust is only your own body and not the bodies of others. The piece of land on which you sit is but an envelop, and you feel afraid of its quake lest your own body would quake consequently, otherwise, the air is always in quake, and you fear it not, for it does not lead to the quake of your own body. Your portion from the whole earthquake is the quake of your own body only.

That is because it is your own earth and dust, your bones the mountains of your earth, your head the sky of your earth, your heart the sun of your earth, your hearing, seeing, and all the other senses the stars of your sky, the blood that runs in your veins the ocean of your earth, your hair the plants of your earth, your limbs the trees of your earth, and so forth to all parts of your body. If the pillars of your body collapse by death, your earth will have then quaked with great quake; and if the bones separate from the flesh, both earth and mountains will have been carried and pounded to powder; and if the bones are thrown, the mountains will have vanished; and if your heart darkens at death, the sun (with its spacious light) will have then been folded up; and if your hearing, seeing, and all your senses become idle, then the stars will have fallen, losing their luster; and if your head split open, the sky will have been cleft asunder; and if your forehead sweat out of the severe terror of death, the oceans of your body will have boiled over with a swell; and if one of your legs is turned on the other, and both are your riding mount, then, the ten-month pregnant she-camels will have been left

untended; and if the soul departs from the body, the earth then will have been flattened out, And cast forth what is within it and become (clean) empty, and so forth.

The point is not to make comparison of all states, but it is to say that by death, the terrors of this minor resurrection will be established on you, without losing anything from the major resurrection. Which benefit do you get from the survival of the stars as regards others so long as your own senses have become idle by death? To be sure, it is the same to the blind both day and night, the eclipse and brightness of the sun, etc, for it eclipses only in regard with him, and not in regard with others; and this is his own portion from it, and the brightness afterwards is the portion of the others. Similarly, when one's head is split open, his sky will have been cleft asunder, for the sky is what is above the head, and whoever has no head, no sky will be good for him: which benefit does he have from the survival of the sky for the others? This is the minor resurrection with its terrors and fears. But there are more severe terrors and deferred fears to come with the major resurrection.

It should be known to you that however long we are in describing this minor resurrection, we would not encompass more than one-tenth its reality; and this minor resurrection is but like the minor birth in comparison with the major birth. Man has two births: the first is to come out from loins to the womb, where he resides in a well-firm place to a specific period of time. In order to reach perfection of creation, he should come upon various stages beginning from being a sperm-drop, then a leech-like clot (of blood), then a piece of flesh like a morsel, etc until he gets out of the narrowness of the womb to the spaciousness of the world. The particularity of the minor resurrection compared to the generality of the major resurrection is like the narrowness of the womb in comparison with the spaciousness of the world. The spaciousness of this world compared to the spaciousness of the world to which one goes by death is like the measure of the womb in comparison with the spaciousness of this world. It is on this measure that you should compare the hereafter with the world. You were not created, nor would you be resurrected but like a single soul. The second creation would be only on the measure of the first creation. We could say that the number of creations is not limited only to two, as referred to by the statement of Allah Almighty: " From changing your Forms and creating you (again) in (Forms) that you know not." (Al-Waqi'ah 61)

﴿ عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّبَدِّلَ أَمۡثَٰلَكُمۡ وَنُنشِئَكُمۡ فِي مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴾

Whoever indeed believes in both resurrections is certain of the world of visibles and the dominion of invisibles; and whoever believes only in the minor resurrection and not in the major one sees only with one eye one of both worlds. This is the evident ignorance and error in which one imitates the one-eyed Dajjal. How heedless you are O poor man, given that in front of you are all of those terrors! Indeed, we all are poor. If you do not believe in the major resurrection out of ignorance and error, is it not sufficient for indication to it the minor resurrection? Have you not heard the statement of the master of Prophets "peace

be upon him": "It suffices death to be a preacher"? (Al-Baihaqi on the authority of A'ishah). have you not heard about his distress at death to the extent that he "peace be upon him" said: "O Allah! Make easy the agonies of death upon Muhammad"? (At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of A'ishah). Do you not feel shy of regarding death too slow to attack you, in imitation of the heedless lowly who " will not (have to) wait for aught but a single Blast: it will seize them while they are yet disputing among themselves! No (chance) will they then have, by will, to dispose (of their affairs), nor to return to their own people!" (Ya Sin 49-50)

﴿ مَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾

If ailment attacks them as a warner of death, they would receive no admonition; and when hoariness befalls them as a messenger from death, they would take no consideration. " Ah! alas for (My) servants! there comes not a Messenger to them but they mock him! See they not how many generations before them We destroyed? Not to them will they return: But each one of them all, will be brought before Us (for judgment)." (Ya Sin 30-32)

﴿ يَٰحَسْرَةً عَلَى ٱلْعِبَادِ ۚ مَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِن كُلٌّ لَّمَّا جَمِيعٌ لَّدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

"Not a Sign come to them from among the Signs of their Lord, but they turn away therefrom." (Ya Sin 46)

﴿ وَمَا تَأْتِيهِم مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ مِّنْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾

That is because " We have put a bar in front of them and a bar behind them, and further, We have covered them up; so that they cannot see. The same is it to them whether you admonish them or you do not admonish them: they will not believe." (Ya Sin 9-10)

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنۢ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَٰهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَسَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

Let's now return to our main purpose: it is clear then that patience is the constancy of the religious motive in resisting the motive of inclination. That resistance is characteristic of mankind, due to the generous scribes entrusted to him. They record nothing from the children under age, or from the mad. We have already mentioned that the good deed lies in turning to get benefit from them, and the evil deed lies in turning away from them, and since there is no way for the child or mad to get benefit, then, no devotion nor turning away is imagined from him. They record the devotion and abstention only from him who has the capability of devotion and abstention. By my life, the commencements of the light of guidance might rise at the age of discernment and grow gradually until the age of puberty, just in the same way as the light of dawn starts to rise and grow gradually until the emergence of sun disk.

But it is still an imperfect guidance that does not guide to the consequences

that result from the evil in the hereafter, if not to the consequences that result from the evil in this world. For this reason, a child is beaten for his leaving prayer in this world, although he will not be punished for that in the hereafter. Furthermore, no scrolls are written down against him to be spread out. It is the duty of the righteous dutiful pious guardians and trustees who imitate the righteous generous scribes from the angels to record both good and evil deeds of the child on the page of his heart, spread that out to him to let him know (the difference between good and evil), and then chastise him for it by beating. Every guardian as such has indeed inherited the good manners of the generous scribes of angels, and used that in favor of the child (under his guardianship), would attain thereby the degree of closeness to the Lord of worlds, just as it is attained by the angels. In this way, he would be in the company of the Prophets, sincere affirmers and lovers of truth, and those brought near to Allah. To this fact the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred in his statement: "I and he who takes care of the orphan will be (as close to each other) as those (fingers) in the Garden." He "peace be upon him" pointed out his index and middle fingers. (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Sahl Ibn Sa'd).

CHAPTER THREE
EXPLICATION OF THE FACT THAT PATIENCE CONSTITUTES HALF THE FAITH

It should be known to you that faith might sometimes be meant to refer to giving trust to the foundations of religion, and sometimes refer to the works that result from the former, and at other times refer to both. Knowledge and works likewise are of different categories. As faith includes all of them all, it consists of over seventy-two branches. We have already referred to the different concepts of faith as such in the book of the Rules of the Creed.

But here, we can say that patience constitutes half the faith on the basis of two considerations, and in accordance with two concepts given to faith:

The first consideration is that faith is meant to refer to giving trust to foundations of religion as well as to works that result from it, and in this way, faith has two fundaments: certainty and patience. Certainty is meant to refer to the incisive knowledge learnt by the guidance therewith Allah guides His servant to the foundations of religion. Patience is meant to refer to work in accordance with this certainty. Certainty lets man know that disobedience is harmful and obedience is beneficial; and it is impossible to leave disobedience totally and persist in obedience totally except by patience, which is to use the religious motive to overpower the motive of inclination. By that consideration, patience constitutes half the faith. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" combined them in his statement: "You have been given the least portion of certainty (of faith) and determination of patience."

The second consideration is that faith is meant to refer to the states that produce works, and not to the knowledge itself. In this way, all what man encounters is divided into what benefits him and what harms him in this world and the hereafter. In relation to what harms him, he has the state of patience; and

in relation to what benefits him, the state of thankfulness. By that consideration, thankfulness constitutes half the faith, just as certainty half the faith by the former consideration. From this viewpoint, Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said, and it might be raised up to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Faith is of two halves: one half is patience, and the other half is thankfulness."

Since patience is to abstain from the motive of inclination by virtue of the constancy of the religious motive, and that the motive of inclination is of two divisions: a motive of appetite and a motive of anger, i.e. the appetite in pursuit of the pleasure, and the anger in flight from the harm, and that fasting is to keep patient on the requirement of appetite only, i.e. the appetite of stomach and sex, and not on anger, it is said, by that consideration, that fasting constitutes half the patience. That is because the perfect patience is to abstain from the requirements of both appetite and anger altogether. By that consideration also, fasting constitutes the quarter of faith. It is on that measure that you should understand how the limits of works and states are determined by religious law, and compared to faith. The basic rule therein is to know the different categories which faith includes.

CHAPTER FOUR
EXPLICATION OF THE FACT THAT ITS NAMES DIFFER BY THE DIFFERENCE OF ITS APPURTENANCES

It should be known to you that patience is of two kinds: physical, i.e. to constantly endure the corporal difficulties. This might be either by act, through doing the difficult works, in regard with worship or anything else, or by tolerance, like patience on the severe beating, painful injuries and ailments, etc. This is praiseworthy once it agrees with the religious law. But the other kind is perfectly praiseworthy, i.e. the psychological patience on deprivation of the natural desires and inclinational requirements. If this is to be patience on the desire of the stomach and sex, it is called chastity; and if it is to endure a particular harm, then, its names change by the change of the harm endured.

If it is to endure a calamity, it is called patience, in opposition to a state called fear and scare, which is to let the motive of inclination go on raising voice, slapping cheeks, tearing clothes, etc. If it is to endure the loss of richness, it is called self-control, in opposition to a state called rejection (of reality). If it is to endure fighting and war, it is called courage, in opposition to cowardice. If it is to control one's anger, it is called forbearance, in opposition to exasperation. If it is to endure one of time's harmful disasters, it is called chest expansion, in opposition to disturbance, disgust and breast constriction. If it is to conceal a secret of another, it is called concealment of secret, and its perpetrator a Concealer. If it is to endure the loss of surplus living, it is called abstinence, in opposition to greed. If it is to endure a little fortune of living, it is called contentment, in opposition to greed.

Most works of faith then are included in patience. For this reason, when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was once asked about faith, he said: "It is patience." That is because it is the most important deed

which includes the greatest portion of works of faith. Allah Almighty combined all of those elements in His statement: " and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing." (Al-Baqarah 177)

﴿ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴾

Those are the different categories of patience according to its different appurtenances. Whoever takes the meanings only from names thinks that those states are different in their reality and nature, just depending on their different names. But he who follows the straight path and looks with the light of Allah Almighty, sees the meanings first and gets acquainted with their realities and then takes heed of the names which are put only to designate them. The meanings are the origins and the names are but subsequents. Whoever seeks for the origins through their subsequents should inevitably slip. To both parties, Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " Is then one who walks headlong, with his face grovelling, better guided, or one who walks evenly on a Straight Way?" (Al-Mulk 22)

﴿ أَفَمَن يَمْشِي مُكِبًّا عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَىٰ أَمَّن يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴾

The disbelievers did not fall into mistake but for their reversal movement: We ask Allah for good success, with His mercy and generosity.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXPLICATION OF CATEGORIES OF PATIENCE IN RELATION TO STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS

It should be known to you that the religious motive, in relation to the motive of inclination, has three states:

The first is to overcome it at all, with the result that it will have no power to dispute with it. This is accomplished by constant patience. At that point, it is said: "Whoever keeps patient has indeed achieved success." But unfortunately, it is only a very few who could attain that level. Undoubtedly, they are the truthful who will be brought near (to Allah Almighty), who said: "Our Lord is Allah" and then they became upright. Those have stuck to the straight way, walked on the even path, and felt assured on the religious motive. It is those who would be called by the caller (on the Day of Judgement): "O (you) soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction! Come back you to your Lord, well pleased (yourself), and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter you, then, among My Devotees! Yea, enter you My Heaven!" (Al-Fajr 27-30)

﴿ يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۝ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ۝ فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ۝ وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴾

The second state is that the motive of inclination overpowers the religious motive completely, with the result that one surrenders to the soldiers of devils, and mortifies himself not because of losing all hope of the effect of mortification. Those are the heedless. They represent the majority of people. It is those who have become slaves of their desires and lusts, and their

wretchedness has seized them. They then put their hearts, which are one of the mysteries of Allah Almighty, under the control of the enemies of Allah Almighty. To them Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " If We had so willed, We could certainly have brought every soul its true guidance: but the Word from Me will come true, "I will fill Hell with Jinns and men all together."" (As-Sajdah 13)

﴿ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدَاهَا وَلَٰكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

It is those who have sold the hereafter for this world, thereupon the loss was their portion. To him who wanted to guide them, it was said: " Therefore shun those who turn away from Our Message and desire nothing but the life of this world. That is as far as knowledge will reach them. Verily your Lord knows best those who stray from His Path, and He knows best those who receive guidance." (An-Najm 29-30)

﴿ فَأَعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿٢٩﴾ ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُم مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اهْتَدَىٰ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

This state is characterized by despair, loss of hope, and deception by desires and wishes. This is, to be sure, the utmost degree of foolishness. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The intelligent is he who mortifies himself and works for the life to come after death; and the foolish is he who follows his own desires, and hopes from Allah (to reward him)." The one in such a state, being admonished, says: "I have longing for repentance, but, at the same time, I have no covet of it, for it has become difficult on me." He indeed has no longing for repentance. But he said: "Verily, Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful, Most Generous, and He is not in need of my repentance." This poor has subjugated his mind to be in service of his desire. He uses it only to deduce the subtleties and tricks thereby to fulfill his desires. His mind has become in service of his desires like a Muslim in the hands of disbelievers, who use him only to look after pigs, keep and carry wine, and so on. His place in the Sight of Allah is the same place of him who subjugates a Muslim and hands him over to the disbelievers, and makes him a captive in their hands. That is because, with his odious crime, he has subjugated that which should not be subjugated, and gave power to such as has no right to take power.

The Muslim has the right to take power due to his knowledge about Allah Almighty and the religious motive he has; whereas the disbeliever should be subjugated due to his ignorance of Allah Almighty, and lack of the religious motive in return for the devilish motive. The Muslim's right on himself is more binding than the right of anyone on him. So, when he subjugates the noble faculty that belongs to the party of Allah Almighty and the soldiers of angels to be under the control of the despicable soldiers that belong to the party of Satan, he seems as if he has enslaved a Muslim to a disbeliever. Nay! He seems as if he aimed at a benefactor king and took his dearest child and

handed him over to his most hateful enemy. Consider then how ungrateful he is to the favors of Allah Almighty, and how responsive he is to His wrath. Indeed, the inclination is the most hateful object of worship on earth in the Sight of Allah Almighty, whereas the mind is the dearest being to be created on the surface of the earth.

The third case is that (the matter of victory and loss in) war between both parties is by turns. This one is among the diligent and not among the successful. The people in this case are those who mixed a good deed with an evil deed, and perchance Allah Almighty would turn to them in repentance.

Those are the states of patience regarding strength and weakness. But further three states spring from the number of the things on which one might keep patient:

One might overpower all desires and lusts, is overpowered by all desires and lusts, or overpower some and is overpowered by some. To the third class the following statement of Allah Almighty refers: "Others (there are who) have acknowledged their wrong doings: they have mixed an act that was good with another that was evil. Perhaps Allah will turn unto them (in mercy): for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (At-Tawbah 102)

﴿ وَءَاخَرُونَ ٱعْتَرَفُوا۟ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا۟ عَمَلًا صَـٰلِحًا وَءَاخَرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾ ﴾

As for those who abandon mortification and rather surrender to their desires and lusts, they are like beasts, nay more straying in way. That is because the beast is not given the knowledge and faculty with which it could resist desires and lusts, unlike such a man who is given the knowledge and faculty with which he could resist desires and lusts, but those are idle in him. This is why he is defective. That is the significance of the poetic verse: "I have never seen a defect in the people like the lack of the capable in perfection."

By the consideration of difficulty and ease, patience also is divided into that which man could hardly persist in it without great effort and suffering, and this is called ostentatious perseverance; and that which is done with ease and the least amount of effort, and it is called patience. If one persists in piety and gives trust in the good end he will receive, the patience becomes very easy on him. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " So he who gives (in charity) and fears (Allah), And (in all sincerity) testifies to the Best, We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Bliss." (Al-Lail 5-7)

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَٱتَّقَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ وَصَدَّقَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

The example of such is like a fighter: to be sure, the strong man is able to overpower the weak with much ease, the least measure of effort, and from the first attack, receiving no suffering nor fatigue. But he could not overpower the strong like him without much effort and great suffering. Such is fighting between the motive of religion and the motive of inclination. It is, indeed, fighting between the soldiers of angels and the soldiers of devils. When the desires and lusts submit and are curbed, the motive of religion takes power, and patience

becomes easy on man by virtue of long persistence, he will be raised up to the station of good pleasure, as will be explained later. To be sure, the good pleasure is higher in station than patience. This is why the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Worship Allah with good pleasure; and if you could not, then, much good lies in keeping patience on what you dislike."

One of the Gnostics said: "Patience has three stations: the first is to abandon appetite, and this is the degree of repentants. The second is to be well-pleased with what is decreed, and this is the degree of the abstinent ascetics. The third is to love what one's master does with him, and this is the degree of the sincere affirmers of faith." Allah willing, we shall show in the Book of Loving that loving is higher in station than the good pleasure, just as the good pleasure is higher in station than patience. That division applies to a particular kind of patience, i.e. the patience on calamities and disasters.

On the other hand, it should be known to you that patience, by consideration of its ruling, is divided into obligatory, supererogatory, undesirable and unlawful. To keep patient on what is forbidden is obligatory. To keep patient on what is undesirable is supererogatory. To keep patient on the forbidden harm you receive is forbidden. Its example is like him whose hand or the hand of whose son is cut off and he keeps patient and remains silent on it; or like him who shows a sexual desire for an unlawful woman, which arouses one's jealousy, but he keeps patient and remains silent. Indeed, this patience is unlawful particularly if such a woman belongs to his family. The undesirable patience is to keep patient on harm one receives from an undesirable source under Sharia.

Sharia then should be made the touchstone of patience. That patience constitutes half the faith should not give you the false impression that all kinds of patience are praiseworthy under Sharia. What is intended is to keep patient on certain and not all things.

CHAPTER SIX

EXPLICATION OF THE DIRE NEED FOR PATIENCE; AND THAT ONE COULD NOT DISPENSE WITH IT

It should be known that all a servant encounters in this world are included under two main categories: what agrees with his disposition, and what disagrees with his inclination and he dislikes. In each, he is in need of patience. Since there is no way but to encounter either both altogether, or at least one of them, he could hardly dispense with patience.

The first category, i.e. what agrees with his nature, like health, safety, wealth, majesty, big clan, large means of living, great number of adherents and followers, and in general, all pleasures of this world. Indeed, man is in dire need of patience on those things. That is because unless he restrains himself from uncontrollable reliance on and involvement and engagement in what is permissible of them, this might lead him to rejection (of reality) and transgression, as confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: " Nay, but man does transgress all bounds, In that he looks upon himself as self-sufficient." (Al-'Alaq 6-7)

﴿ كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَيَطْغَىٰٓ ۝٦ أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰٓ ۝٧ ﴾

This led one of the Gnostics to say: "The believer could keep patient on the disaster, but none other than a sincere affirmer of faith could keep patient on wellbeing." According to Sahl: "To keep patient on wellbeing is more severe than to keep patient on disaster." When the gates of this world with its pleasures and delights were opened to the companions "Allah be pleased with them" they said: "We were afflicted with the temptation of adversity and we kept patient; and when we were afflicted with the temptation of prosperity, we were unable to keep patient."

That is why Allah Almighty warned His servants of the temptation of wealth, wives and children when He said: " O you who believe! Let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act thus, the loss is their own." (Al-Munafiqun 9)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ۝٩ ﴾

And: "O you who believe! Truly, among your wives and your children are (some that are) enemies to yourselves: so beware of them!" (At-Taghabun 14)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَّكُمْ فَٱحْذَرُوهُمْ ۚ وَإِن تَعْفُوا۟ وَتَصْفَحُوا۟ وَتَغْفِرُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝١٤ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, the children are to develop in one miserliness, cowardice and grief." (Abu Ya'li Al-Mawsili on the authority of Abu Sa'id). When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saw his grand son Al-Hassan "Allah be pleased with him" stumbling in his shirt, he dismounted from the pulpit and embraced him and said: "Allah has told the truth when He said: " And know you that your possessions and your progeny are but a trial; and that it is Allah with whom lies your highest reward." (Al-Anfal 28)

﴿ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَآ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝٢٨ ﴾

Indeed, when I saw my grandson stumbling, I could not help carrying him." (the composers of Sunan on the authority of Buraidah).

In that is a lesson to be learnt by such as has insight. So, the perfect patience is to persevere wellbeing. To keep patient on wellbeing is not to rely on it but rather to know that it is but a deposit with one, and it might likely be restored at any time. This means that he should not rely on it, nor let himself freely enjoy of it, nor engage or involve himself in it. He should observe the rights of Allah due on his property, by spending, on his body by aiding others, on his tongue by telling the truth; and the same is true of all favors bestowed by Allah on him. This kind of patience is connected with gratitude in the sense that it could not be accomplished without thankfulness, as will be shown later.

Furthermore, to keep patient on prosperity is more severe for it is connected

with the capability, and it is out of protection to have no power (to be an argument against you). To keep patient on your getting cupped by another is easier than to keep patient on cupping or bloodletting yourself. The hungry, in absence of food, is more capable of patience than he is in the presence of pleasant and delicious kinds of food. This is why the temptation caused by prosperity is more severe.

The second category, i.e. what disagrees with one's inclinations and nature. It might be optional, like the acts of obedience and disobedience; or compulsory like calamities and adversities; or not optional, but one has the choice to remove, like taking revenge on him who does harm to him. The total is three divisions.

The first division is that which is optional, i.e. all of his acts of obedience and disobedience. They are divided into two:

First: the acts of obedience, and a servant is in need of keeping patient on obedience. Indeed, to keep patient on it is very difficult. That is because one, by nature, refrains from slavery and rather desires for supremacy. For this reason, one of the Gnostics said: "There is no soul but that it conceals what Pharaoh disclosed when he said: 'I am your supreme Lord.'" But Pharaoh found the opportunity to disclose his supremacy for he ridiculed his people and they obeyed him in his claim. However, there is none but that he has the same claim with his servant, followers, and all who are under his guardianship, even though he does not disclose it. He is not infuriated when they fall short of serving him but because of such a feeling of arrogance and enslavement, in which he shares the Lord the garment of supremacy. In other words, slavery in itself is difficult on the soul at all. Some acts of worship are disliked because of laziness like prayer, others because of miserliness like giving in charity, and others because of both like Hajj and Jihad. Patience on the acts of obedience then is to persevere difficult things. One needs to be patient in three states:

The first is before the act of obedience, in order to make sincere and true his intention, refrain from the stains of showing off and causes of evils, and be resolute on sincerity and loyalty. This is difficult patience particularly in the sight of him who knows well the real nature of intention and sincerity, the evils of showing off and self-plots. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" drew the attention to that when he said: "The (rewards of) deeds depend on intentions, and everyone shall have (the reward) according to his intention." (both sheikhs on the authority of Umar). In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " And they have been commanded no more than this: to worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being True (in faith)." (Al-Bayyinah 5)

﴿ وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓاْ إِلَّا لِيَعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مُخۡلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ حُنَفَآءَ ﴾

That is why Allah Almighty gave precedence to patience over work as shown from His statement: "Not so do those who show patience and constancy, and work righteousness; for them is forgiveness (of sins) and a great reward." (Hud 11)

﴿ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ وَأَجۡرٞ كَبِيرٞ ﴾

The second is during the work itself. One should not become heedless of Allah during the work, nor weary to achieve its etiquettes and manners. It should rather persist in its requisite manners to the end of work. This requires him to keep patient on the causes of weakness until he finishes from the work; and this is also very difficult. To it Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " an excellent reward for those who do (good)! Those who persevere in patience, and put their trust in their Lord and Cherisher." (Al-Ankabut 58-59)

﴿ نِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَـٰمِلِينَ ۝ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝ ﴾

He means those who kept patient until they finished from the work.

The third state is after finishing from the work. In this state, one needs to keep patient on disclosing it and showing it to others in avoidance of being heard and seen of men. He also should keep patient on regarding it with the eye of conceit or pride lest it would become invalid and fruitless, as shown in the statement of Allah Almighty: "O you who believe! obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and make not vain your deeds!" (Muhammad 33)

﴿ ۞ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَلَا تُبْطِلُوٓا۟ أَعْمَـٰلَكُمْ ۝ ﴾

Allah Almighty also said: " O you who believe! Cancel not your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury, like those who spend their substance to be seen of men, but believe neither in Allah nor in the Last Day." (Al-Baqarah 264)

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُبْطِلُوا۟ صَدَقَـٰتِكُم بِٱلْمَنِّ وَٱلْأَذَىٰ كَٱلَّذِى يُنفِقُ مَالَهُۥ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ ۝ ﴾

Whoever does not keep patient on making reminder of his generosity after giving his charity out has indeed invalidated it.

The acts of obedience are divided into obligatory and supererogatory, and man needs to keep patient on them all. Allah Almighty combined them all in His statement: " Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin." (An-Nahl 90)

﴿ ۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَٱلْإِحْسَـٰنِ وَإِيتَآىِٕ ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ ۝ ﴾

Justice is obligatory, doing good supererogatory, and liberality to kith and kin is to keep good relations with them. All of this needs patience.

Second: the acts of disobedience. A servant is in dire need of keeping patient on all kinds of sins and acts of disobedience, which Allah Almighty combined in His statement: " and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion." (An-Nahl 90)

﴿ ۞ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ وَٱلْبَغْىِ ۝ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The Muhajir is he who absconds evil; and the Mujahid is he who resists his inclination." (Ibn Majah and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Fadalah Ibn Ubaid). Sins are required by inclination, and the most severe perseverance is to keep patient on sins to which one has got accustomed by practice. To be sure,

habituation is regarded a fifth nature; and if it is joined to desire, then, two soldiers of Satan would back each other against the soldier of Allah Almighty, with the result that the religious motive would have no power to suppress them.

If this act (of disobedience) is made easy to man to do, patience on it becomes heavier, like, for instance, the patience on the sins of tongue of backbiting, talebearing, wrangling, self-praising directly or indirectly, the harmful jokes, words of scorn and contempt, dispraising and slandering the dead, etc. all of this is outwardly backbiting and inwardly praising oneself. That is because the soul has two desires in that: the first is to deny the other, and the second is to affirm oneself. By both desires, one's supremacy is achieved, in opposition to slavery (to Allah) which he is commanded to observe. If both desires are combined together and become easy on the tongue to practice, patience on them becomes more difficult.

Although they are the greatest destructives, there has been despair of disapproving them in the heart, because of people's familiarity and intimacy with them. One might put on silk and his conduct be disapproved severely, although if he lets loose his tongue to talk with evil and immorality about people during day and night, his conduct would not be disapproved, given that the Prophet "peace be upon him" affirmed that backbiting is more severe (in effect) than fornication. Whoever does not have the power to control his tongue during conversation, let him resort to seclusion, for nothing other than seclusion would save him. Indeed, to keep patient on seclusion is easier than to keep patient on silence with socialization.

On the other hand, patience on a particular sin differs in accordance with the strength or weakness of its cause. Easier than the movement of tongue is the movement of the passing thoughts with doubts. The thought remains lurking within the mind and one could hardly keep patient on it unless the mind is occupied by another religious concern, which is apt to remove it. That case applies to the one whose interests are concentrated on one concern. Unless he uses his thought in any particular field, the doubts are unlikely to fade away.

The second division pertains to such of incidents as occur to him against his will, and it is within the power of his free choice to avert them. Its example is like him who is harmed by word or deed, or his property is usurped, etc. To keep patient on that sometimes might be obligatory, and sometimes supererogatory. One of the companions said: "We did not regard man having true faith until he kept patient on harm." In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " We shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you may cause us. For those who put their trust should put their trust on Allah." (Ibrahim 12)

﴿ وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاذَيْتُمُونَا ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" once distributed property among Muslims and one of the Bedouins said: "The Countenance of Allah has not been intended by that distribution." When the news of that reached the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be

upon him", the color of his cheeks turned red (out of anger) and he said: "Allah's mercy be upon my brother Moses. He received harm more than that, but he kept patient." (both sheikhs on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

Allah Almighty further said in this connection: " And obey not (the behests) of the Unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and heed not their annoyances, but put your trust in Allah. For enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs." (Al-Ahzab 48)

﴿ وَلَا تُطِعِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَدَعْ أَذَىٰهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾

And: "And have patience with what they say, and leave them with noble (dignity)." (Al-Muzzammil 10)

﴿ وَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَٱهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

And: "We do indeed know how your heart is distressed at what they say. But celebrate the praises of your Lord, and be of those who prostrate themselves in adoration." (Al-Hijr 97-98)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُن مِّنَ ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ ﴾

And: "You shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your personal selves; and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you, from those who received the Book before you and from those who worship many gods. But if you persevere patiently, and guard against evil, then that will be a determining factor in all affairs." (Al Imran 186)

﴿ ۞ لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟ أَذًى كَثِيرًا ۚ وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾ ﴾

For this reason, Allah Almighty praises those who remit their rights of legal retribution saying: " And if you do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out: but if you show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient." (An-Nahl 126)

﴿ وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُم بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَئِن صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Keep good relation with him who even severs relation with you; give him who even withholds from you; and forgive him who even wrongs you." In the Gospel, Jesus, son of Mary "peace be upon him" said: "It has been said to you that the tooth for tooth, nose for nose, etc, and I say to you: do not avert evil with evil: nay! He, who slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him your left, and he who takes your upper garment, give him your lower garment, and he who subjugates you to walk with him for a mile, walk with him for two miles." All of this belongs to the command to keep patience on harm. To be sure, patience on harm is the highest level of patience, for it is a product of the co-operation between the religious motive, the motive of desire and the motive of anger.

The third division pertains to the incidents that occur against one's will and one has no power to avert, like calamities and disasters, caused, for instance, by

the death of the dear persons, the loss of property and wealth, the destruction of crops and fruits, the evaporation of health by ailment, blindness and impairment of the parts of body, etc. To be sure, to persevere such events is the highest station of patience. According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them": "Patience in the Qur'an has three levels: patience on performing the obligatory deeds enjoined by Allah Almighty, and it has three hundred degrees; patience on what is forbidden by Allah Almighty, and it has six hundred degrees; and patience on the calamity just at the first stroke, and it has alone nine hundred degrees." This third level, although it belongs to the supererogatory deeds, is given superiority to the first two, although they belong to the obligatory deeds, for every believer has the power to keep patient on what is forbidden. But the patience on the disaster doomed to one by Allah Almighty could not be endured but by the Prophets, for it is the goods of the sincere affirmers of truth. That is why it is difficult on people. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say (by way of supplication): "I ask You (O Allah) to provide me with certainty (of faith) thereby to make easy upon me the calamities of this world." (At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Al-Hakim on the authority of Ibn Umar). This kind of patience is supported by the good certainty (of faith).

According to Abu Sulaiman: "By Allah, since we could hardly keep patient on what we like: how could we keep patient on what we dislike?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: Allah Almighty says: "If I decreed for anyone of My servants a calamity in his body, property or children, which he received with good patience, I would feel shy of him on the Day of Judgement to set up a balance or spread out a scroll for him (to be reckoned)." (Ibn Adi on the authority of Anas). He "peace be upon him" further said: "To wait the release with patience is an act of worship." (Al-Quda'i on the authority of Ibn Umar and Ibn Abbas). He "peace be upon him" said: "No believing servant is afflicted with a calamity and says just what Allah Almighty ordered him to say, i.e. 'We all to Allah, and to Him we shall return. O Allah! Give me reward for my (patience on my) calamity, and recompense me with something better than it', but that Allah Almighty does so to him." (Muslim on the authority of Umm Salamah).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: Allah said to Gabriel: "O Gabriel! What is the reward of him who has been deprived of (the light of his) two eyes?" he said: "Glory be to You! We know not but what You have taught us." Allah Almighty said: "His reward is to abide forever in my Abode (Paradise), and look at My Countenance." (At-Tabarani; and Al-Bukhari with a slight variation of wording). He "peace be upon him" further said: Allah Almighty says: "If I afflict anyone of My servants and he receives that with patience, and does not complain Me to his visitors, I would give him flesh better than his, and blood better than his; and if I cause him to recover, he would recover without sins upon him; and if I cause him to die, I would take him unto My mercy." (Malik in his Muwatta' on the authority of Ata' Ibn Yasar from Abu Sa'id).

David "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! What is the reward of the aggrieved who keeps patient on the affliction seeking Your good pleasure?" he said: "His reward is that I would dress him in the dress of faith, and never deprive him of it." Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz said in one of his sermons: "Allah never gives a servant a favor and then deprives him of it in recompense for patience but that the recompense is better than what he deprives him of." Then, he recited the statement of Allah Almighty: "those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!" (Az-Zumar 10)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴾

Fudail was asked about patience and he said: "It is to be pleased with the fate of Allah Almighty." It was said: "How is that?" he said: "The contented never hopes anything above his station (of satisfaction)."

It was said that once Ash-Shibli was confined in a hospital and a group of people came to visit him and he asked them: "Who are you?" they said: "Your lovers who have come to visit you." He started to throw them with stones, and they ran away. On that he said: "Were you really my lovers, you would keep patience on my trial." It is reported that a Gnostic had a parchment in his pocket which he used to take out and look at every hour and it had the following statement: "Now await in patience the Command of your Lord: for verily you are in Our eyes." (At-Tur 48)

﴿ وَٱصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا ﴾

It was said that once the wife of Fath Al-Mawsili stumbled and the nail of her toe got broken. On that she laughed. It was said to her: "Do you not feel the pain?" she said: "Indeed, the pleasure of its reward has removed from my heart the bitterness of its pain."

David said to Solomon "peace be upon them": "The piety of a faithful believer is attested by three things: Good reliance (on Allah Almighty) in what he has not got, the good pleasure with what he has got, and the good patience on what he has missed." Our Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "It is out of veneration and right you should have to Allah Almighty not to complain of your pain, nor make a mention of your calamity." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya, but from one of the religious jurists and not from the Prophet himself). It is narrated from one of the righteous that he came out one day having a parcel in his sleeve and behold! He lost it and it seemed to have been taken from his sleeve. On that he said: "May Allah bless him in it for perhaps he might be in need of it more than me." It is further narrated on the authority of a righteous man that he said: I came upon Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with them" and he was at his last breaths among the killed. I asked him: "Do you like to get a sip of water?" he said: "Bring me closer to the enemies and make the water in the shield: indeed, I am fasting, and if I am to live until sunset, I may drink of it." That is the way the mystic travelers on the path to hereafter used to keep patient on the trial of Allah Almighty.

You may say: "How does one attain the degree of patience on calamities given that it is beyond his free choice for he is forced by necessity willingly or

unwillingly? If it is intended that he should have no aversion to the calamity itself, it is not up to him to do so." In reply to that, it should be known to you that one is far from the station of the patient by fright, tearing clothes, slapping cheeks, complaining so much, showing gloominess, and changing the habit of clothes, food, drink, and so on. All of those are under his choice, and he should avoid them, and rather be satisfied with the decree and fate of Allah Almighty. He should continue on his habits and entertain in himself the belief that what he has lost was but a deposit with him which was taken back by its real owner.

In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Anas from Umm Sulaim "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: "My child died while Abu Talhah (her husband) was absent. I stood and covered him and placed him in one corner of the house. Then, Abu Talhah came back and I prepared his meal to break his fasting. He started to eat and asked about the child and I said: "Fine, praise be to Allah. Since he fell ill, he has never been still and quiet more than he is tonight." Then, I beautified myself to him more than I have ever done until he fulfilled his desire from me. Then, I said to him: "Do you not wonder at our neighbours?" he said: "What is the matter with them?" I said: "They were given something by way of borrowing and when it was demanded and taken back from them, they were scared." He said: "How bad are they!" I said: "Then, this is your son: he was a deposit from Allah Almighty, and now, Allah has taken him unto His Presence." He praised Allah and said: "We all belong to Allah and to Him we shall return." In the morning he went to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and related the story to him. On that he said: "O Allah! Bless them in (what they have done) in their last night." The narrator said: "Afterwards, I saw seven from among their children in the mosque, and all of them had kept the Qur'an by heart." (Abu Na'im and both sheikhs in their Sahihs on the authority of Anas). It is further narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I saw myself (in a dream) having entered the Garden and behold! I saw Ar-Rumaisa', the wife of Abu Talhah."

It is said that "The good patience is that with which the afflicted could hardly be recognized from anyone else." Neither the heartache nor the flowing of tears turn one from the station of the patient, since it is expected from almost all the attendants for death. Flowing of tears is an aspect of heartache for the loss of the dead, and it is a part of human nature. For this reason, when Ibrahim, the son of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died, his eyes overflowed with tears. It was said to him: "Have you not forbidden us to do so?" he said: "That is out of mercy, and indeed, Allah Almighty bestows mercy upon the merciful among His slaves." This also does not turn one from the station of contentment. to be sure, he who gets himself cupped or phlebotomized does so with satisfaction, though because of which he feels pain, and his tears might flow if the pain is severe. This will be explained in more detail in the Book of Contentment, Allah willing.

Ibn Abu Najih wrote a message to condole one of the caliphs in which he

said: "the one who should observe the right of Allah Almighty upon him in what is taken from him is he, who regards with greatness the right of Allah Almighty in what remains for him. Moreover, it should be known to you that (the effect of) whoever passed before you remains with you, and whoever remains after you would be rewarded for you. It should be also known that the reward of the patient for what they are afflicted with is greater than the favor upon them concerning it." Thus, whoever drives away the aversion of the affliction by thinking about the reward he would receive for it, would inevitably attain the degree of the patient. It is true that the perfect patience requires one to conceal ailment, poverty and calamities. In this context, it is said that "One of the treasures of righteousness is to conceal ailment, calamities and charity."

This explains to you that patience is binding in general in all cases and under all circumstances. Whoever even abstains from all desires and appetites, and remains in seclusion, aloof from the people, is also in need of patience, without which he could hardly endure solitude outwardly, and the doubts and whispers aroused by Satan inwardly. To be sure, the movement of passing thoughts never ceases. Those thoughts always roam about what has been lost and could not be caught, or what would inevitably come to pass in the future; and in both cases, he spends time uselessly. The heart is the servant's instrument, and his lifetime his goods and commodities. If one's heart is heedless even as short as a breath of the celebration of Allah Almighty with which he attains the company of Allah, or of thought about Allah Almighty with which he becomes more acquainted with Allah, and more lovable to Him, he would be a loser.

This is in case his thoughts and doubts are oriented on what is permissible; and that occurs in rare cases. People, for the most part, think about the different tricks to enable them to fulfill their desires and appetites, each according to his prevailing one. Satan always disputes with him in every movement in opposition to his purpose and willpower. One might have the false impression that he disputes with him and disagrees with his command, or even that the most sincere of his lovers disagree with him, and disobey his orders, and then thinks of the way to scold them and oppress them and how they justify their disagreement with him. In this way, he is incessantly engaged. Indeed, Satan has two soldiers: the flying one and the walking one. The obsessive doubts are the result of the movement of his flying soldier, and the desire is the movement of his walking soldier.

Satan was created from fire, whereas man from sounding clay like pottery. Pottery is always made from clay burnt with fire. The clay is still by nature, and fire is in permanent movement. The flaming fire could not be imagined without movement. That cursed was obligated to become still (for a while) and fall in prostration to the human being which Allah Almighty created from clay, but he rejected with obstinacy and arrogance. He expressed his disobedience by saying: "I am better than he: You did create me from fire, and him from clay." (Al-A'raf 12)

﴿ قَالَ أَنَا۠ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِى مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُۥ مِن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

Since that cursed did not fall in prostration to our father Adam "peace be

upon him" there should be no covet of his prostration to anyone of his offspring. Once he abstains from his whispers, hostilities and evils, he will have showed his compliance and submission, and his submission symbolizes his prostration. Indeed, submission is the essence of prostration, and placing the forehead on the ground only its physical aspect and sign.

So, let not the outward shell divert you from the pearl, the body divert you from the soul, and the husk divert you from the core, lest you would be of those detained by the world of visibles from the dominion of invisibles. You should be sure of the fact that Satan is one of those given respite (to destroy mankind), and by no means would he humble himself before you by abstention from whispers until the Day of Judgement, unless your concerns turn to be only one, and you occupy your heart only with Allah Almighty. Thus, he would find no way to prevail over you. Hence, you would become one of the selected servants of Allah, who are exempted from the authority of that cursed.

Furthermore, think not that any empty heart could be void of him for it is like the blood which runs and reaches everywhere in the body of mankind. It is like the air in the vessel. If you like to have the vessel void of air without replacing it with water or with anything else, you would covet of that which is impossible. On the contrary: air enters into it in proportion to the quantity of water that is taken out of it. Similarly, the one whose heart is engaged in religion could hardly be far from the movement of Satan. If he is heedless of Allah Almighty even as short as a while, he would have no companion at that very moment other than Satan. For this reason, Allah Almighty said: "If anyone withdraws himself from remembrance of (Allah) Most Gracious, We appoint for him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to him." (Az-Zukhruf 36)

﴿ وَمَن يَعْشُ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُۥ شَيْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ لَهُۥ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty dislikes the youth whose (heart is) empty."

That is because if the youth does not have a deed to engage him with what is permissible to seek its aid to achieve the duties of his religion, his outward remains empty, but not his heart in which Satan nests, lays his eggs and pullulates, and the young ones, in turn, lay their eggs and pullulate and so forth. To be sure, the offspring of Satan proliferate faster than the offspring of all animals on earth, for his nature is from fire. That proliferation increases whenever he finds his helpful factors. The desire in the self of a youth in relation to Satan is like the dry factor in relation to fire. As well as the fire goes out once the fire wood is consumed, Satan also vanishes from the heart in the absence of desire. Thus, your desire is your most avowed enemy. When asked about Sufism during his crucifixion, Al-Hussain Ibn Mansur Al-Hallaj said: "It is yourself: if you do not engage it, it would inevitably engage you."

The real nature of perfect patience is to keep patient on every blameworthy movement. The movement of the inside is more fitting for one to keep patient on it. That is permanent patience which nothing interrupts but death. We ask

Allah Almighty to provide us with good success by His favor and generosity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EXPLICATION OF MEDICINE OF PATIENCE; AND THAT WHOSE AID IS SOUGHT TO SUPPORT IT

It should be known that He Who has brought the ailment to existence has also brought its medicine and promised recovery. Patience, though being difficult or unlikely to be achieved, is possible by the mixture of knowledge and work. Both knowledge and work are the mixture from which the medicines of all the ailments are composed for the heart-diseased. But each ailment needs a particular kind of knowledge and work. As well as the patience is of different kinds, the causes that impede it are also of different kinds. As well as the causes are different, the kinds of medicine also should consequently be different. That is because the medicine is to counteract and curb the cause with its opposite. To explain all of that in detail is too lengthy. But at least, we know the way in many examples.

Let's say that if one lacks patience on the sexual desire, and is possessed by such desire in a way that he could not have control over his pudendum, or over his eye in case he has the power to control his pudendum, or over his heart and soul in case he has power to control both his pudendum and eye, and that his heart suggests to him the requirements of desire, and thus diverts him from the regular celebration of Allah, thought and righteous deeds, the solution is to say that the patience is the fighting between the religious motive and the motive of inclination. If we like that one of both fighters should win over the other, there is no way for us but to strengthen it, and weaken the other. In this case, we have to strengthen the religious motive, and weaken the motive of inclination. There are three things to use in order to weaken the motive of desire.

One of those is to consider the substance of power that strengthen the desire, like the good delicious and pleasant food that moves the desire by virtue of its kind and quantity, and belittle it by regular fasting, and limiting the meals of breaking fast to the little quantity of food whose effect is weak on sex. Meat, for instance, and all kinds of food that stimulate sexual desire should be avoided.

The second is to cut off its irritating causes at the moment. Indeed, the sexual desire is irritated by looking at the things that prompt it. Looking always moves the heart, and the heart stirs up the desire. This is achieved by keeping retired and avoiding places where one might look at the pictures that move sexual desire, from which one should flee away. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The gaze is one of the arrows of Iblis." It is an arrow shot by the cursed, and no shield could avert it but shutting the eyelids, or fleeing away from the range of its harm. He indeed shoots that arrow through the pictures that move desire, and once you turn away from them, his arrow would not affect you.

The third is to console the self with the permissible sex, i.e. through marriage. In all desires, there is among the permissible things what makes one dispense

with the impermissible. That is, to be sure, the most beneficial remedy for the majority of people. Indeed, to belittle the quantity of food, and limit its kinds might have a negative effect on the other works, although it might not curb the sexual desire of a great portion of men. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I advise you to marry, and whoever could not (for lacking the wherewithal's), let him observe fasting, for indeed fasting is a protective shield for him."

Those are three means. The first remedy, i.e. to prevent food, resembles to prevent fodder from a recalcitrant beast or a voracious dog, in order that it would weaken and lose its power. The second resembles to keep a dog from flesh, or the animal from parley, in order not to move its appetite for seeing it. The third resembles to console it with something of what it likes, in order for it to reserve some power that enables it to endure discipline.

On the other hand, there are two ways to strengthen the religious motive:

The first is to engage himself in the many benefits and fruits of self-mortification in religion and world, by considering the narrations we have related about the excellence and good consequence of patience in the world and the hereafter. According to a tradition: "The reward of patience on a calamity is more than what one might have lost. That is why he is envied because of such a calamity (on which he keeps patient), for what he has lost is limited only to the duration of his lifetime, and what he has obtained (of reward by patience) would survive even after death; and whoever abandons a despicable for a valuable should not grieve for the loss of the despicable at present." That belongs to the category of knowledge which is a part of faith. It sometimes weakens and sometimes becomes strong. The more it becomes strong, the more it strengthens the religious motive, and the more it weakens, the more it weakens it. The strength of faith is referred to as certainty, which moves the determination of patience. But unfortunately, people rarely are given both the determination of patience and the certainty of faith altogether.

The other is to habituate that religious motive to gradually fight with the motive of inclination step by step until it tastes the pleasure of victory over it, with the result that it would have the courage to challenge it, and become stronger in fighting. To be sure, exercise and practice of difficult works always add more to the powers that produce those works. This is why the porters, farmers and fighters are stronger than the normal people. In general, these who practice difficult works are stronger than those who do normal jobs like tailors, religious jurists, makers and sellers of perfume, etc, whose power is not strengthened by practice.

The first resembles to induce the fighter with a present when he wins and promise him of many things of honour, in the same way as Pharaoh promised his magicians , when he tempted them to win over Moses "peace be upon him" saying as Allah Almighty tells about him: " you shall in that case be (raised to posts) nearest (to my person)." (Al-A'raf 114)

﴿ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴾

The second is to habituate the child who is expected to be a fighter, to

practice fighting from his early childhood, in order to obtain the required courage, and become stronger. That is because whoever abandons entirely the mortification for patience, the religious motive weakens in him, and fails to resist the motive of inclination; and whoever habituates himself to oppose his inclination, inevitably overpowers it however and whenever he likes.

That is the method of remedy applicable to all kinds of patience. All could not be included in discussion. The most difficult is to hold back the soul from self talk which is intensified particularly for him who has curbed the outward and external appetites, and devoted himself to seclusion, by living in solitude and spending the time in celebration, thoughtfulness and observation, in which case, the evil whispers attract him from all sides. There is no remedy for that state except to cut off all relations, outwardly and inwardly, by fleeing away from one's family, children, property, friends and companions, and resorting to a little corner, satisfying oneself with the least requirements of sustenance. But even, all of this would not be sufficient unless all concerns are reduced to one, i.e. to be concerned only with Allah Almighty.

If this even possesses the heart, it would not be sufficient, unless it has a place in thinking, and swimming inwardly in the dominion of the heaven and earth, and the wonders of the making of Allah Almighty, in addition to all categories of the knowledge of Allah Almighty, until when all of this prevails over his heart, it would have the power to avert the evil whispers of Satan. If he could not swim inwardly in the dominion of the heavens and earth, nothing would save him but the continuous devotional recitals or prayers and celebrations which he should persist in at every moment. Besides, he needs to entertain the presence of heart, for indeed, it is the inward thought which engages the heart other than the outward and external devotional recitals.

However, after all of that, he could not persist in this but for some and not all the time, for he could not be free, at many times, from incidents to occupy him from devotional recitals and celebration, like ailment, fear, harm or transgression he might receive from those with whom he mixes, for he could hardly dispense with such as with whom he mixes to aid him in the means of living. That is one of the things that might occupy him.

Another is necessary, if not more necessary than the previous, i.e. his engagement in getting his food, drink, clothes, residence, or in general, the means of sustenance and living. If he undertakes that by himself, he would engage in it; and if it is undertaken by another one else, he could hardly be free from having his heart engaged by the one who undertakes it.

But after cutting off all relations with the world, a greater portion of time would be available to him, provided that no calamity nor affliction would befall him. During those times, the heart becomes pure, thinking and contemplation available, and it is revealed to him of the mysteries and wonders of Allah Almighty in the dominion of the heavens and earth hundreds of times what might be revealed to him during a very long time in which his heart is engaged by the connections with this world. That is the highest station to be attained by acquisition and effort. As to how much what

is revealed of the mysteries of Allah Almighty as regards states and deeds, it is like fortune to be doomed to each one. In many cases, effort might be much, and the outcome little, and vice versa.

One should rely in his effort on the attraction of (Allah) Most Gracious, which are equal to the deed of all men and jinn. This is beyond the free choice of the servant. One has the choice to expose himself to that attraction as long as he cuts off his heart all attractions of this world, for indeed, whoever is attracted to the low could by no means be attracted to the high. Everyone who is concerned with the world is, to be sure, attracted to it. To cut off all attracting relations is intended by the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Your Lord gives gifts, in some of your days. Behold! Expose yourselves to those gifts." Those gifts and attractions are due to heavenly causes as shown by Allah in His statement: "And in heaven is your Sustenance, as (also) that which you are promised." (Adh-Dhariyat 22)

﴿ وَفِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

That is the highest kind of sustenance. The heavenly lights are veiled from us, so we do not know when Allah makes available to us the means of sustenance. All we have to do is to disengage the place and await the mercy of Allah Almighty to descend. The example is like him who reclaims the land, cleans it off grass, sows the seeds along its different parts, and do all possible means fitting for cultivation: all of this is of no avail to him unless it rains and he does not know when Allah Almighty will doom it to rain. But at the same time, he is confident of the mercy and bounty of Allah Almighty, and that He never passes a year without rain. Similarly, no year, month, or day is void of a gift or attraction from the gifts and attractions of Allah Almighty. So, the servant should have purified the heart from the grass of desires and appetites, sowed in it the seeds of willpower and sincerity, and exposed it to the wind of mercy and bounty.

As well as the chance for rain to fall is more likely in spring and when clouds emerge, the chance for those gifts and attractions is more likely during the noble times, and at the congregation of people and hearts like the case on the day of Arafah, on Friday, and on the days of Ramadan. Such congregations are means to call for the mercy of Allah Almighty, to the extent that rain is called for by them at the time of invoking for water. But to call for the drops of the revelations of Allah Almighty from the treasures of the dominion is more likely than to call for the drops of rainfall and clouds from over mountains and the depths of oceans. To be sure, revelations are present with you in your heart, and as you are occupied from them by your worldly relations and desires, they are veiled from you. All you need is to break and curb desires in order for the veil to be lifted and removed, so that the lights of gnosis would rise from the depths of the heart. To dig channels in the ground to get the water therefrom is easier than to go to a far and low place to have it.

For it is always present in the heart, though forgotten by occupation from it, Allah Almighty calls the gnosis of faith remembrance as He states: " We have,

without doubt, sent down the reminder; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)." (Al-Hijr 9)

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

And: "(Here is) a Book which We have sent down unto you, full of blessings, that they may meditate on its Signs, and that men of understanding may receive admonition." (Sad 29)

﴿ كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾

And: "And We have indeed made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember: then is there any that will receive admonition?" (Al-Qamar 17)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

That is the remedy of patience on evil whispers and occupants; and it is the last degree of patience. Patience on all relations is prior to patience on the passing thoughts. According to Al-Junaid "may Allah have mercy upon him": "To travel from the world to the hereafter is easy on the faithful believer, to desert the people for the sake of loving the truth is difficult, to travel from the self to Allah Almighty is more difficult, and to keep patient with Allah is the most difficult." He refers to the difficulty of patience on the occupants of the hearts, followed by the difficulty of desertion of people, and the most difficult thing on the self is to cut off relations from the people, and abandon majesty and authority. That is because the pleasure of majesty, loftiness, authority and arrogance over the people is the sweetest in this world for the rational men. How could it not be so, given that it requires one of the attributes of Allah Almighty, i.e. supremacy? Supremacy is lovable to the heart, for it befits all high and noble matters, as referred to by Allah in His statement: " Say: "The Spirit (comes) by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)"" (Al-Isra 85)

﴿ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾

The heart is not criticized for that love: nay, it is criticized for the mistake it has fallen in because of the deception of the cursed Satan, who is alienated from the world of command, thereupon he envied him of his being of the world of command, with the result that he misled him. How could the heart be criticized for it since it seeks for the happiness of the hereafter? It indeed seeks permanence after which there is no annihilation, honour after which there is no humiliation, safety after which there is no fear, richness after which there is no poverty, perfection after which there is no shortage. All of those belong to the attributes of Lordship. The heart is not blamed for seeking after that. Every one has the right to aspire for a great kingdom which has no ends. The seeker after kingship aspires for honour, highness and perfection. But there are two kinds of kingship: a kingship that is stained by pain whose loss is fast; and the other is permanent in which there is neither impurity nor pain, and none would interrupt. But the former is hasty and the latter is deferred.

Man was created as hasty, desirous for the transitory and Satan came to

him and induced him through his hasty nature and allured to him the present. He also tempted him through his foolishness, and promised him, by way of deception, of the kingdom of the hereafter besides the kingdom of this world, as confirmed by the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The foolish is he who followed his own inclinations, and hoped that Allah (would fulfill his) wishes." The result is that he was deceived and engaged by seeking after the kingdom of the world from the kingdom of the hereafter. But the successful among people has not hung himself by the rope of Satan's deception, since he knew the ways of his plotting, thereupon he abandoned the transitory world. To this fact Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " Nay, (you men!) But you love the fleeting life, And leave alone the Hereafter." (Al-Qiyamah 20-21)

﴿ كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ ۝ وَتَذَرُونَ ٱلْآخِرَةَ ۝ ﴾

And: " As to these, they love the fleeting life, and put away behind them a Day (that will be) hard." (Al-Insan 27)

﴿ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ يُحِبُّونَ ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ وَيَذَرُونَ وَرَآءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا ۝ ﴾

And: " Therefore shun those who turn away from Our Message and desire nothing but the life of this world. That is as far as knowledge will reach them. Verily your Lord knows best those who stray from His Path, and He knows best those who receive guidance." (An-Najm 29-30)

﴿ فَأَعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۝ ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ ۝ ﴾

When the plotting of Satan became spread among the people, Allah Almighty sent His angels to the Messengers whom He chose from among them, and revealed to them how the enemy ruin and induce people. Then, they engaged in calling the people to the real kingdom of the hereafter other than the perishable baseless kingdom of this world. They addressed them saying: "O you who believe! What is the matter with you, that, when you are asked to go forth in the Cause of Allah, you cling heavily to the earth? Do you prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life, as compared with the Hereafter." (At-Tawbah 38)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَا لَكُمْ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمُ ٱنفِرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱثَّاقَلْتُمْ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ أَرَضِيتُم بِٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا مِنَ ٱلْآخِرَةِ ۚ فَمَا مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا فِى ٱلْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ۝ ﴾

The Torah, Gospel, Psalms, Qur'an, the books of Abraham and Moses "peace be upon them" and in general, all Scriptures were sent down only to invite people to the permanent never-ending kingdom. They are required to be kings in this world, as well as kings in the hereafter. To be a king in this world is to abstain in it and be satisfied with the little from it. To be a king in the hereafter is to come close to Allah Almighty, thereby one attains eternal stay and ceaseless honour, besides a delight of the eye that is kept in this world which no soul knows.

Satan, on the other hand, invites the people to the kingdom of this world, other than that of the hereafter, for his knowledge that the latter would skip him. The kingdoms of the world and hereafter are harmful to him (in case the world is unblemished) but it is his good fortune that the kingdom of the world is blemished and were it to be unblemished, of a surety, he would have envied man for it. But the kingdom of this world could hardly be void of disputes and embitterment's, and the long concerns and interests in thinking and planning. And even in case it is unblemished and all means are fulfilled in it, the lifetime of man would inevitably come to an end " till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out (in beauty): the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it: there reaches it Our command by night or by day, and We make it like a harvest clean-mown, as if it had not flourished only the day before! thus do We explain the Signs in detail for those who reflect." (Yunus 24)

﴿ إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَخَذَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَٱزَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَآ أَنَّهُمْ قَٰدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَآ أَتَىٰهَآ أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَٰهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَ بِٱلْأَمْسِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

Allah Almighty set forth a parable for this world when He said: "Set forth to them the similitude of the life of this world: it is like the rain which We send down from the skies: the earth's vegetation absorbs it. But soon it becomes dry stubble, which the winds do scatter: it is (only) Allah Who prevails over all things." (Al-Kahf 45)

﴿ وَٱضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ ٱلرِّيَٰحُ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿٤٥﴾ ﴾

When abstinence from this world is a present kingdom, Satan envies man for it. The meaning of abstinence is that a man has control over his desire and anger which submit to the religious motive and indication of faith. That is a meritorious kingdom, for its owner thereby becomes free, and by being possessed by his desire, he becomes a slave of his belly and pudendum, as well as of all his desires and lusts. In this way, he becomes like an owned animal that is led by the nose string of desire to wherever it likes and wishes. How deceived is man! He thinks he will attain kingdom but he has become possessed by others, and he will attain supremacy, but he has become a slave. Such is only adverse in this world, and downturned in the hereafter. For this reason, when one of the kings asked one of the ascetics: "Do you have a need?" he said: "How should I have a need from you given that my kingdom is greater than yours?" he asked him: "How is that?" he said: "You are a servant of that which is, in turn, my servant." He said: "How is that?" he said: "You are a slave of your desire, anger, belly and pudendum, and I have control over them all, and they have become slaves of me."

That is the kingdom in this world which leads to the real kingdom in the hereafter. Those deceived by Satan have lost both the world and the hereafter. But those who succeeded to walk straight on the even path have won both.

If you come to know now the meaning of kingdom and supremacy, slavery and subjection, and the way of error in that, and how Satan dissembles and puts man to confusion concerning this, it would become easy on you to turn away from kingdom and majesty and keep patient on losing that, for by that loss, you would become a king at present, and expect for a kingdom in the hereafter. But if those lights are revealed to him who has been accustomed to majesty and authority for a long time, only knowledge and disclosure are not sufficient for remedy. He should add work to that. His work should include three things:

The first is to flee away from the place of majesty in order not to see its means and thus it becomes difficult on man to keep patient on leaving it, like him who is possessed by desire, when he flees away from the pictures that move his sex appeal. Whoever does not do so has indeed been ungrateful to the favor of Allah in regard with the spaciousness of the earth. He Almighty said in this respect: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)?" (An-Nisa' 97)

﴿ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ﴾

The second is to force himself to do things in opposition to what he used to do. He could, for instance, exchange ostentation for simplicity, expensive clothes of splendor for cheap clothes of humbleness, and so forth. The same is true of all his states, habits and settings as regards his food, drink, clothes, residence, etc. in short, he should exchange everything required by majesty he used to do for its opposite. There is no significance for remedy unless one does the opposite of what he used to do.

The third is to adopt a gradual approach in one's movement from an extreme to its opposite. This means that he should not move at once to the farthest extreme, for disposition, by nature, is always repulsive, and it could not be shifted from its habits except gradually. Let him first curb some and leave others of those blameworthy things and once he is satisfied with them, let him curb more and so on until he finds himself having curbed all blameworthy characteristics with good satisfaction. To this fact, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred in his statement: "This religion is strong. So, delve into it nicely and step by step, and cause not the worship of Allah to be hateful to you, for the uprooted has not cut sufficient distance (to keep himself safe), nor left a riding mount (to carry him if he likes to return)." (Ahmad on the authority of Anas; and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Jabir). He "peace be upon him" further said in this issue: "Impose not hard terms upon yourselves regarding that religion, for none imposes hard terms upon himself concerning that religion but that it overpowers him."

The remedy of patience concerning evil whispers, desire and anger returns to the laws of self-mortification we have already mentioned in the Book of Self-Discipline in the Quarter of Destructives. So, take it your constitution, in order to know the remedy of patience in all categories we have already shown in detail. But patience, according to gradation, upgrades with one to a state in which it becomes difficult on him as it was at first, and the matter is reversed for him in a

way that what he used to like becomes hateful, and what he used to dislike intimacy with him and so on. The recognition of that depends on experience and taste, and it has a resemblance in the reality. When the child is forced to learn under compulsion in the beginning, patience on leaving playing for learning becomes difficult on him. But when his insight opens, and knowledge becomes intimate with him, the matter is reversed, and it becomes difficult on him to keep patient on leaving learning for playing.

In this respect, it is narrated that a Gnostic asked Ash-Shibli about patience, thereupon he said: "Patience is in (the religion of) Allah." He said: "No, it is not so." He said: "Then, patience is for the sake of Allah Almighty." He said: "No, it is not so." He said: "Then, patience is with Allah Almighty." He said: "No, it is not so." He said: "Then, what is it?" he said: "Patience is to be on Allah." Ash-Shibli cried so loudly that he was about to die. In comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: " O u who believe! persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear Allah; that you may prosper" (Al Imran 200)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱصۡبِرُواْ وَصَابِرُواْ وَرَابِطُواْ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ﴾

It is said: "Persevere in patience and constancy in (the religion of) Allah Almighty, vie in such patience by Allah Almighty, and strengthen each other with Allah Almighty."

It is said that patience for the Sake of Allah is satisfaction; patience by Allah is survival; patience with Allah is loyalty; and patience on (alienation from) Allah is desertion. It is also said about that in the form of a poetic verse: "Patience on (leaving) you is of blameworthy consequences, whereas patience in anything else is praiseworthy." In the same meaning, it is also said: "Patience is good in anything, but patience on (abandoning) you is not good."

That is what we liked to explicate regarding the sciences and mysteries of patience.

Part two: Gratitude

This part consists of three pillars:

The first pillar discusses the excellence, real nature, divisions and rulings of gratitude

The second pillar talks about the real nature, general and particular divisions of favor

The third pillar deals with the best of gratitude and patience

FIRST PILLAR
EXCELLENCE, REAL NATURE, DIVISIONS AND RULINGS OF GRATITUDE

Excellence Of Gratitude

It should be known that Allah Almighty joined gratitude with remembrance of Him in His Holy Book, although He said: " and remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt." (Al-Ankabut 45)

﴿ وَلَذِكۡرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكۡبَرُ ﴾

In this respect, Allah Almighty said: "Then do you remember Me; I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and reject not Faith." (Al-Baqarah 152)

﴿ فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴾

And: " What can Allah gain by your punishment, if you are grateful and you believe? Nay it is Allah that recognizes (all good) and knows all things." (An-Nisa 147)

﴿ مَّا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا ﴾

And: "And swiftly shall We reward those that (serve us with) gratitude." (Al Imran 145)

﴿ وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴾

In comment on the statement of Allah Almighty relating about Iblis: "Because You have thrown me out of the Way, lo! I will lie in wait for them on Your Straight Way" (Al-A'raf 16)

﴿ قَالَ فَبِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴾

It is said that it refers to the way of gratitude. In view of the high rank of gratitude, the cursed Satan slandered mankind saying: " nor will You find, in most of them, gratitude (for Your mercies)." (Al-A'raf 17)

﴿ ثُمَّ لَآتِيَنَّهُم مِّن بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَن شَمَائِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ ﴾

Allah Almighty said about mankind: " but few of My servants are grateful!" (Saba' 13)

﴿ وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُورُ ﴾

Allah Almighty promised to give for gratitude without exception as shown from His statement: "If you are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you; but if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is terrible indeed." (Ibrahim 7)

﴿ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ ۖ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ ﴾

But He Almighty made exceptions in five things: enrichment, giving sustenance, response to supplication, forgiveness and repentance. He Almighty said: " soon will Allah enrich you, if He wills, out of His bounty, for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." (At-Tawbah 28)

﴿ يُغْنِيكُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ إِن شَاءَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

He also said: "Nay, On Him would you call, and if it be His Will, He would remove (the distress) which occasioned your call upon Him." (Al-An'am 41)

﴿ بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ ﴾

And: " for Allah does provide for those whom He will, without measure." (An-Nur 38)

﴿ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴾

And: "but He forgives anything else, to whom He pleases." (An-Nisa' 48) and:

"For Allah will turn (in mercy) to whom He will; and Allah is All-Knowing, All Wise." (At-Tawbah 15)

﴿ وَيَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ ﴾

Gratitude is one of the good manners of Lordship as stated by Him: "for Allah is Most Ready to appreciate (service), Most Forbearing." (At-Taghabun 17)

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴾

Furthermore, Allah Almighty made gratitude and praise the commencement of the speech of the inhabitants of Paradise as shown from His statement: "They will say: "Praise be to Allah, Who has truly fulfilled His promise to us." (Az-Zumar 74)

﴿ وَقَالُواْ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُۥ ﴾

He Almighty further said: "and the close of their cry will be: "Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds!"" (Yunus 10)

﴿ أَنِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴾

As regards the Prophetic narrations, a mention may be made of the following:

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The thankful who eats (even without fasting) has the same rank of the patient fasting." (Ibn Majah, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Abu Hurairah). It is narrated on the authority of Ata' that he said: I entered upon A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" and said: "Tell us about the most amazing thing you saw from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"." She wept and said: "And which of his actions were not amazing? One night he came to me (and it was my turn) and entered into the covering (or the quilt) with me until when our bodies became in touch, he said to me: "O daughter of Abu Bakr! Let me worship my Lord." I said: "Indeed I like your nearness, but at the same time, I give preference to letting you do what you wish." I gave him permission. He stood to a water-skin and performed ablution, but without pouring much water. He then stood in prayer and went on weeping until his tears flowed on his breast. When he bowed, he wept; and when he fell in prostration, he also wept; and when he raised his head, he wept; and so on until Bilal came and informed him with the Adhan of the due time of Fajr prayer. I said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! What causes you to weep given that Allah has forgiven for you your previous and later sins?" on that he said: "Then, should I not be a thankful slave? And why do I not do since Allah Almighty revealed to me the following statement: " Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of Night and Day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding." (Al Imran 190)

﴿ إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴾

(Ibn Hibban in his Sahih). This signifies that one should not cease to weep at any rate.

That is confirmed by the narration about one of the Prophets who came

upon a small stone with a great quantity of water springing from it. He was astonished at that. Allah Almighty made it utter the following: "I have been weeping since I heard the statement of Allah Almighty: " then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones which is prepared for those who reject Faith." (Al-Baqarah 24)

﴿ فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴾

So, I am weeping out of fear of Him." It asked him to save it from the fire, and He did accordingly. Some time later he saw it in the same state of weeping, thereupon he asked it: "Why are you weeping now?" it said: "The first weeping was the weeping of fear, and that weeping is the weeping of gratitude and pleasure. However, the servant's heart is like a stone if not harder, and its hardness would be removed only by weeping in both states of fear and gratitude."

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, a caller would make a public call: "Let the praisers stand up." They would stand, and a flag would be fixed for them, and they would enter the Garden." It was said to him: "Who are the praisers O Messenger of Allah?" he said: "Those who thank Allah Almighty in all states (or who thank Allah Almighty at the time of ease and adversity, according to another version)." (At-Tabarani, Abu Na'im and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Abbas). He "peace be upon him" said: "Praise is the upper garment of (Allah) Most Gracious." Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "As for the patient, their abode will be the abode of peace, and when they are admitted to it, I would confer upon them the favor of thankfulness, and it is the best speech; and when they thank, I would give them more; and when they look at Me, I would give them more and more."

When it was revealed in the treasures what was revealed, Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Then, which wealth should we take?" The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Let anyone of you take a tongue which celebrates (Allah), or a heart which thanks (Allah)." He thus ordered them to preserve a thankful heart instead of wealth and property. According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "Gratitude constitutes half the faith."

Explication Of Definition And Real Nature Of Gratitude

It should be known to you that gratitude is one of the stations of the mystic travelers (on the path of Allah); and it consists of knowledge, state and work. Knowledge is the origin which develops the state, and the state, in turn, develops work. The knowledge is to know the favor from the benefactor. The state is the pleasure one entertains as a result of the favors. The work is what one does to achieve the purposes of the benefactor. This work pertains to the heart, the organs and the tongue. All of this should be explicated in order to encompass the real nature of gratitude. What is said, indeed, in the definition of gratitude falls short of fathoming its real meaning and essence entirely.

Knowledge is **the first foundation**, as we have mentioned, and it is to know

three things: the favor itself; the fact that it is for him; and the benefactor with His attributes and acts by which the favor is done. There should be then a favor, a benefactor, and a beneficiary to whom the favor is given by intent and will. Those should be known with anyone else other than Allah Almighty. In relation with Allah Almighty, it should be known that all favors are from Him, and all intermediaries and means are but under His control, subjugated by His Will. This knowledge is after monotheism and sanctification. The first gnosis of faith is sanctification and once he knows the Sanctified, he should subsequently know that none is sanctified but One and no more, and that is the monotheism. Once he knows that, he comes to know that all things in this universe spring only from that One, as a favor from Him. This is why it ranks third to sanctification and monotheism. Besides monotheism and sanctification, it implies the perfect power and uniqueness of doing.

To this fact, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred in his statement: "Whoever says 'Glory be to Allah' receives ten good deeds; and whoever says 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah' receives twenty good deeds; and whoever says 'Praise be to Allah' receives thirty good deeds." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The best remembrance is to say 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah'; and the best of supplication is to say 'Praise be to Allah'." (At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Jabir). He "peace be upon him" said too: "Nothing of those words of remembrance yields manifolds (of reward) as does 'Praise be to Allah." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya but ending up with Ibrahim An-Nakh'i).

But think not that those good deeds are given only for tongue movement with those words without their meaning present in the heart. 'Glory be to Allah' is a statement which indicates to sanctification; and 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah' indicates to monotheism; and 'Praise be to Allah' indicates to the acknowledgement that the favor is from Allah, the One and Only. The good deeds then are given in accordance with those items of gnosis which are among the categories of faith and certainty.

It should be known to you that the perfection of this knowledge is achieved by negation of polytheism not only through words, but also through acts and deeds. When one receives a favor from a king and he sees that one of his ministers or assistants has a role in bringing that favor to him, he indeed has ascribed partners to that real benefactor. That is because he does not see the favor from the king from all sides: but from him in part and from others in part. The result is that his pleasure with that would be divided between them, although it should be unique to the king, who is the real benefactor. It is true that when he sees the signature of the king on the paper which carries the command of favor, his monotheism and gratitude to the king are not affected, for he thinks that those are but subjugated by the king, under his control. Similarly, he should know that the king's assistant or minister or storekeeper who brings the favor to him is but subject to the will of the king in doing so, and were the matter to be referred to anyone of them, and there is no fear of the king, he might not have conveyed the favor to him.

Having known this, one should be sure that the role of the storekeeper is no

more than that of the pen and the paper, which develops no ascription of partners to the king in terms of being the only benefactor. Similarly the animals endued with free choice are also directed in that free choice by the willpower of Allah Almighty, to do what they are doomed to do, willingly or unwillingly. They are like the storekeeper who is forced to give you in compliance with the order of the king, and had the matter been up to him, he would have given you nothing at all. In short, all you receive at the hands of anyone is a favor from Allah Almighty, who directs upon him the causes that force him to give, by stimulating in him the belief that his good in this world and the hereafter lies in giving you. In the face of that belief created in him by Allah Almighty, he finds no way but to give you. He then gives you to serve himself and not for your sake, and had it been only for your sake, he would have given you nothing at all; and had it not been for the fact that he knows that your benefit leads to his benefit, surely, he would not have benefitted you at all. In this way, he is not a benefactor in relation to you: on the contrary, he takes you as a means to attain another favor which he expects. But the real benefactor is He, Who subjugated him to give you, willingly or unwillingly.

If you know that, you have known Allah Almighty as is fitting for Him, and known also His acts and deeds, and if you know His acts and deeds, you will be a monotheist, able to give thanks to Him as He deserves. Nay! You will become thankful only by that knowledge. For this reason, Moses "peace be upon him" said in his conversation with the Lord: "O Lord! You created Adam with Your Own Hand and did such and such things to him: how had he thanked You?" Allah Almighty said: "He knew that all of this is from Me." His knowledge in itself was thankfulness. Then, one could not give thanks unless he knows that all favors are from Him Alone. If doubts arises to you as to that fact, you would have no real knowledge of the favor nor of the benefactor. That is because your pleasure would be divided between the real benefactor and others who have no role in the favor. The more your pleasure with the benefactor is short, the more your deed would be short.

The second foundation is the state that stems from the knowledge, and it is the pleasure with the benefactor, with submission and humbleness, which is, in itself, thankfulness, just as the knowledge is considered thankfulness. But, the pleasure might be thankfulness only if it achieves its necessary prerequisite. Its necessary prerequisite is that your pleasure should be with the benefactor not with the favor nor with the act of giving it. This might be difficult on you to understand. So, let's set forth an example for you.

When a king intends to set out on journey, and he grants a horse to a man, he, in turn, is imagined to be pleased from three points of view: the first is to be pleased with it as a horse to be ridden, a preserved property to be utilized when there is necessity, and so on. That is the pleasure of him who has no fortune in the king himself: but his purpose is to get the horse itself. Were he to find it in a desert and take it, he would have the same pleasure. The second is to be pleased not with it as a horse, but as an indication of the king's care and sympathy for him. In this case, were he to find the horse in a desert, or be given it but from

anyone else other than the king, he would not have the same pleasure. That is because he is not in need of the horse itself or because he regards it with slightness in relation with the good position he expects to attain in the heart of the king. The third is to be pleased with it for he will enable him to set out in service of the king, and bear the difficulty and trouble of journey in his service in order to attain closeness to him, thinking that, by so doing, he might promote to the degree of ministry as he is not satisfied with the position of being cared for or given a horse by the king. He indeed does not aspire for the ministry for its own sake in so much as for the fact that it spares for him the opportunity to see and be near the king regularly; and were he to be given the choice between the nearness without the ministry or the ministry without the nearness, surely, he would choose the nearness without the ministry.

Those are three levels: the first is void of the meaning of thankfulness for the beneficiary restricts his view to the gift itself, and his pleasure is with the horse itself and not with the giver. That is the state of everyone who is pleased with a gift in terms of being a delicious and pleasant gift that agrees with the fulfillment of his desires and purposes, thereby he is far from the concept of gratitude. The second implies the meaning of gratitude but in as much as the pleasure is not with the benefactor himself but with his care and sympathy which stimulate him to give gifts to the beneficiary in the future. That is the state of the righteous who worship Allah for fear of His punishment and in expectation for His reward. But the perfect gratitude is implied in the third level, where the servant is pleased with the favor of Allah Almighty in its being a means to enable him to attain the nearness of Allah, be in His neighbourhood, and enjoy the permanent look at His Bounteous Countenance.

That is the highest level. Its sign is that he rejoices with the world but inasmuch as it is a farm for the hereafter, and enables him to fulfill the duties of his religion, and grieves with any gift that might divert him from the remembrance of Allah Almighty, and keep him off His way. That is because he does not want the gift for its being a pleasant delicious, but just for it enables him to be near Allah, just as the man of the horse which wants it only to carry him in the company of the king in order to see him and become near him perpetually. For this reason, Ash-Shibli "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "The gratitude is to see the benefactor and not the gift itself." According to Al-Khawas: "The laymen give thanks for the food, drink, clothes and residence, whereas the private give thanks for the inputs of the hearts."

That level is unattainable by him in whose sight the pleasures and delights are restricted only to stomach, sex, and such perceptibles as colours and sounds, apart from the pleasures of the heart. To be sure, in the state of health, the hart is pleased with the remembrance of Allah Almighty, gnosis of and meeting with Him. But it is pleased with anything else if it is befallen by the disease of the evil habits, just as some abnormal people are pleased with eating clay, and some ill persons loathe the sweet and edible things, and are delighted with the bitter things. To that meaning, the following poetic verse refers: "And whoever has an ill bitter mouth would feel sore even the sweet fresh water."

That is the prerequisite of the pleasure with the favors and gifts of Allah Almighty. If the highest level is unattainable, let it be the second level. But the first level is inconsiderable. How many a difference between him who wants the horse for the sake of the king, and he who wants the king for the sake of the horse; and how many a difference between him who wants Allah to give him favors and gifts, and he who wants the gifts and favors of Allah to reach Allah thereby.

The third foundation pertains to work according to the pleasure that ensues from the knowledge of the benefactor. This work relates to the heart, the tongue and the organs. In relation to heart, it is to intend good inwardly and outwardly for the people. Concerning the tongue, it is to show gratitude to Allah Almighty with the praises indicative of that. Regarding the organs, it is to use the favors and gifts of Allah Almighty in obedience of Him, and avoid using them in disobedience of Him. In this way, the gratitude of eyes, for example, is to screen all defects seen in any Muslim; and the gratitude of ears is to screen all defects heard about him, and so on. This belongs to the gratitude for the favors of Allah Almighty with the organs.

The gratitude of the tongue is to show, through words, one's good pleasure with Allah Almighty, and he is commanded to do so. It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to a man: "How are you?" he said: "Fine." He "peace be upon him" repeated the same question, and the man gave the same reply until when it was the third time he said: "Fine, praise be to Allah and a lot of thanks be to Him." On that he "peace be upon him" said: "This is just what I wanted from you to say." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Al-Fudail Ibn Amr and Abdullah Ibn Amr; and Malik in his Muwatta' but ending it up with Umar). It was the habit of the righteous predecessors to ask each other about their states with the intention to bring out the gratitude for Allah on the tongue of each other, perchance the thankful would be obedient and the one who caused it to be uttered obedient too. By no means they intended showing off.

However, anyone who is asked about his state falls between two choices: either to give thanks to Allah or make a complaint against his state: thanksgiving is obedience and complaint is disobedience. And how should it not be considered disobedience the complaint against the King of all kings in Whose Hand all things are, to an owned slave who has no power to do anything? It is more fitting for a servant, if he does not endure patience on the fate and trial of Allah Almighty, and his weakness leads him to complain, to make his complaint to Allah Almighty and not to anyone else. It is He Alone Who puts to trial, and He Alone has the power to remove it. To be sure, the servant's humiliation to his master is honour, whereas his complaint to anyone else like him is a humiliation, and to show humiliation to a servant alike is most odious ignominy. Allah Almighty says: " The things that you worship besides Allah have no power to give you sustenance: then seek you sustenance from Allah, serve Him, and be grateful to Him: to Him will be your return." (Al-Ankabut 17)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَعۡبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَمۡلِكُونَ لَكُمۡ رِزۡقٗا فَٱبۡتَغُواْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرِّزۡقَ وَٱعۡبُدُوهُ وَٱشۡكُرُواْ لَهُۥٓۖ إِلَيۡهِ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴾

And: " Verily those whom you call upon besides Allah are servants like unto you: call upon them, and let them listen to your prayer, if you are (indeed) truthful!" (Al-A'raf 194)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمۡثَالُكُمۡۖ فَٱدۡعُوهُمۡ فَلۡيَسۡتَجِيبُواْ لَكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴾

Thanksgiving with tongue then is a part of gratitude. It is narrated that a delegate came to Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz "may Allah have mercy upon him" and a young man stood to speak on their behalf thereupon Umar said: "Let the oldest of you speak." On that he said: "O Commander of Believers! Were the matter to depend on the age, surely, from among the Muslims, there are such as older than you." He said: "Then, speak." He said: "We are not a delegate who have come for a desire, nor are we moved by fear. As for the desire, your bounty has fulfilled it. As for fear, your justice has made us safe from it. But we are the delegate of gratitude, and we have come to give thanks to you with the tongue and then leave."

Those are the foundations of gratitude that encompass its meaning comprehensively. But as for the statement of him who says that 'gratitude is to acknowledge the gift of the benefactor with submission', it is the consideration of only the act of the tongue with some states of the heart. In relation with the statement of him who says that 'gratitude is to praise the charitable person', it is the consideration of only the act of tongue. But the statement of the one who says that 'gratitude is to devote oneself to seclusion on the carpet of contemplation with permanent sanctity' is the consideration of most aspects of thanksgiving, with nothing skipping therefrom but the act of the tongue. The statement of Hamdun Al-Qassar that 'gratitude is to see yourself in the position of a parasite as regards thanksgiving' means that the gnosis is one of the meanings of gratitude. The statement of Al-Junaid that 'gratitude is to see yourself unfitting for the gift' describes one of the states of the heart in particular.

Those are their phrases which express their states, and this is why they differ according to their difference. Therefore, anyone of them might give different answers in accordance with his different states, for they do not speak but in expression of their current prevailing state as they engaged in what concerns them, and abandon what concerns them not, or in proportion to the state of the asker from their viewpoint, as they limit their phrases to the extent which he needs and refrain from what he needs not. So, think not that what we have already mentioned means that we slander them, or that were all of those meanings to be offered to them they would deny them: this is unimaginable on the part of any rational except as far as the dispute that occurs to the mind as to whether the term 'gratitude' includes all or some of the meanings is concerned. But it is not our purpose in that book to explain in detail those deep linguistic issues; and it is Allah Who grant success with His mercy.

Explication Of The Way Of Gratitude To Allah Almighty

It might occur to your mind that we thank a benefactor for he has, to some extent, of fortune which makes him fitting for gratitude. We might give thanks to kings by praising them in order to become dearer to the people, and their generosity seem to the people, with the result that they gain better reputation and majesty in their sight; or by serving them which is to help them achieve some of their purposes; or by bowing in front of them as servants in order to increase their followers and authority. Those kings then are not thanked except for any of those reasons. But this is not unfitting as regards Allah Almighty, from two points of view:

The first is that Allah Almighty is deemed far beyond fortunes and purposes, exalted from being in need of service or assistance, or of more majesty and authority by praising and lauding, or more followers by bowing and prostrating as servants in front of Him. We thank Him in the same way as we thank a king who is benefactor with no expected fortune, i.e. we thank him by sleeping at home, in which the king has no fortune, and he is absent, and has no knowledge of what we do. To be sure, Allah Almighty has no fortune in all of our acts.

The other point of view is that all we do by our choice is a gift given to us by Allah Almighty. To be sure, our organs, power, will and determination, and in total the causes of our movement, if not our movement itself, are created as a favor by Allah Almighty. How then could we thank a favor with the help of another favor? If we are given by a king a vehicle to ride and we take another or are given another also by him, the other would, by no means, be a way of thanksgiving for the first on our own part: on the contrary, the other would be in need of thanksgiving as would be the first. The thanksgiving thus could not be thanked except by way of another favor, and so forth.

This means that thanking Allah Almighty is impossible due to those points of view, in which there is no doubt given that they are confirmed by Sharia. What is then the way to combine both?

In reply to that, it should be known to you that this thought occurred to the mind of David and Moses "peace be upon them" who said: "O Lord! How should I thank You given that I could not thank You except with the help of another favor from You?" or in another version: "Given that my gratitude to you is but another favor from You which makes binding upon me to thank You once again for it?" on that Allah Almighty revealed to him that "Once you know that, you will have thanked Me", or in another version: "If you acknowledge that the favor is from Me, I would accept that (acknowledgement) as thanksgiving from you."

But you may argue: "Although I have understood the question, I could not understand the significance of what was revealed to them. I indeed, know how it is impossible to thank Allah Almighty. But at the same time, how should the acknowledgement of such impossibility be reckoned as thanksgiving? That is because such acknowledgement is in itself a favor from Him, how has it become thanksgiving? I could not understand that. It seems as if whoever does not thank

has indeed given thanks, for the acceptance of the second gift is considered thanksgiving for the first one. The mystery that lies behind that is abstruse. Would you please make it clear by an example?"

In reply to that, it should be known to you that by so doing, you will knock one of the gates of gnosis, which transcends the science of practical religion. But at any rate, let's refer to some of its features. Here, there are two views:

One is that which makes you look with the eye of mere monotheism and lets you know that He is the grateful and the appreciated, the lover and the beloved. That is the view of him who knows that in the whole existence, there is none but Him, and that everything will perish barring His Countenance. That is perpetually true for the other is he who is never imagined to exist independently, and that other is nonexistent, and its existence is impossible for the real existent is he who exists by Himself, and whoever does not exist by itself is indeed nonexistent, for its existence depends on another. The real existent then is he who survives by himself in such a way that if anyone else is doomed to nonexistence, he would ever survive independently. If, besides its independent existence, he sustains others, he is then a sustainer. There is no sustainer but one, and otherwise is unimaginable. Thus, in the existence, there exists none but the Ever-Living, Sustainer (of all existence), the Only one, the Eternal. If you adopt that view, you would know that all things come from Him Almighty, and to Him all things shall return, and that He is the grateful and the appreciated, the lover and the beloved.

From that point of view, Habib Ibn Abu Habib understood the following statement: " Truly We found him (Job) full of patience and constancy, how excellent in Our service! ever did he turn (to Us)!" (Sad 44)

﴿ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَٰهُ صَابِرًا ۚ نِّعْمَ ٱلْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

He said in comment on that: "How astonishing! He gave and praised (whom He gave)." i.e. He gives for patience, for which He praises. This means that if He praised for giving, He indeed has praised Himself: He is the praiser and the praised, as well as He is the lover and the beloved. That is a high level which you could not understand but through an example to befit the limit of your mind. It is obvious that if a composer likes his composition, he has indeed loved himself, and that if a maker likes his making, he has indeed loved himself, and that if a parent likes his child as being his own child, he has indeed loved himself, etc. all things in the existence are the making and creation of Allah Almighty, and if He liked them, He has indeed loved Himself.

That is the view of him who looks with the eye of monotheism, a state referred to by Sufis as self-annihilation i.e. that one is detached from himself as well as from anything else other than Allah in a way that he sees nothing but Allah Almighty. Whoever does not understand that says: "How has he been detached (from himself), given that he has a mass, size and dimension and occupies a space and eats, drinks and breathes?" The ignorant scoff at them due to their ignorance of the significance of their speech. To this Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " Those in sin used to laugh at those who believed, And whenever they passed by them, used to wink at each other (in mockery); And when they returned to their own people, they would return

jesting; And whenever they saw them, they would say, "Behold! These are the people truly astray!" But they had not been sent as Keepers over them!" (Al-Mutaffiffin 29-33)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا۟ كَانُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا۟ بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَإِذَا ٱنقَلَبُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمُ ٱنقَلَبُوا۟ فَكِهِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَضَآلُّونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَمَآ أُرْسِلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

But He Almighty showed afterwards that the laughter of the Gnostics at them in the morrow (i.e. in the hereafter) is more significant as shown from His statement: " But on this Day the Believers will laugh at the Unbelievers: On Thrones (of Dignity) they will command (a sight) (of all things)." (Al-Mutaffiffin 34-35)

﴿ فَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾ عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾

Similarly, the people of Noah "peace be upon him" mocked at him when they saw him engaged in the making of the ark, thereupon he said to them as stated by Allah Almighty: "If you ridicule us now, we (in our turn) can look down on you with ridicule likewise!" (Hud 38)

﴿ إِن تَسْخَرُوا۟ مِنَّا فَإِنَّا نَسْخَرُ مِنكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾

That is the first view.

The other view is that of such of men as have not attained the station of self-annihilation. They are of two divisions:

The first are those who do not acknowledge but their own existence, and deny that there is a Lord to be worshipped. Those are the blind in both eyes for they deny what is really proved to be true, i.e. Allah, the Sustainer of whole existence, Who sustains all things in the universe, and all things depend in existence on Him. Furthermore, they affirm survival to their own selves. But even, were they to know the reality, they would learn that they would neither survive nor cause themselves to exist. They, in fact, are caused to, and do not cause themselves to exist. There is a big difference between the real existent and the one caused to exist. In the universe, there is only One Existent and one caused to exist. The Real existent is a fact, and the one caused to exist is false. The Real Existent is independently surviving and sustainer of all in existence, whereas the one caused to exist is perishable and ending. If all things on the earth shall perish, then, none will abide barring the Countenance of your Lord, Full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour.

The other division are of those who are not fully blind, but just one-eyed. That is because they see with one eye the Real Existent Whom they do not deny. But the other eye is blind, for it does not see the annihilation of the one caused to Exist. In this way, they affirm another existent with Allah Almighty, thereby they are polytheists, just as the former are atheists. If such is only blear-eyed, he would make sense of disparity between both existents, thereby he affirms one as the Lord and the other as a slave. It is only by that extent of disparity between both and shortage in the other (perishable) existent he affirms that he joins the sphere of monotheism.

Between both, there are countless levels on the basis of which the monotheists differ. The Books of Allah revealed on His Messengers are like the kohl therewith the sights shine, and the Prophets are like those who put kohl in the eyes of people. They came to invite people to pure monotheism, i.e. 'There is none worthy of worship except Allah'. Its meaning is to see none other than Allah, the One and Only. Only a few are those who attain the perfect monotheism, and on the opposite extreme stand the rejecters and atheists, and they also are few. The idolaters said: "We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah." (Az-Zumar 3)

﴿ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ﴾

By that statement, they were on the first threshold of monotheism, even reluctantly. The middling represent the majority. From among them, there are such as whose insights open and facts of monotheism seem to them but like the fleeting short-lived lightning, and others with whom they last for some time after which they vanish. They survive in rare cases, each according to his level of faith.

When Allah Almighty commanded His Prophet "peace be upon him" to come closer, it was said to him: " bow down in adoration, and bring yourself the closer (to Allah)!" (Al-'Alaq 19)

﴿ وَٱسْجُدْ وَٱقْتَرِب ﴾

He said during his prostration: "I seek refuge with Your pardon from Your punishment, from Your good pleasure from Your displeasure, and I seek refuge with You from You: I could not reckon praises on You, for You are just as You have described Yourself." (Muslim on the authority of A'ishah). His saying "I seek refuge with Your pardon from Your punishment" refers to seeing only the acts of Allah Almighty, i.e. he seemed as if he did not see but Allah and His acts, thereupon he sought refuge with some of His acts from some of His acts. Then, he raised up to the point of detachment from seeing the acts to seeing the source of acts, i.e. the attributes thereupon he said: "And I seek refuge with Your good pleasure from Your displeasure", and both are among the attributes (of Allah Almighty).

Then, he observed that this is insufficient for monotheism, thereupon he raised up from the point of seeing the attributes to the point of seeing the Divine Essence, and said: "And I seek refuge with You from You." That is a flight from Him to Him without seeing any act or attribute. But he saw himself having fled from Him to Him, sought refuge and praised. Thus, he was detached from seeing himself regarding that as shortage, and came closer by saying: "I could not reckon praises on You, for You are just as You have described Yourself." His saying "I could not reckon" is a statement about his self-annihilation; and his saying "You are just as You have described Yourself" refers to His being the Praiser and Praised simultaneously, and that all things come at first from Him, and to him all things will return in the last, since " Everything (that exists) will perish except His own Face. To Him belongs the Command, and to Him will you (all) be brought back." (Al-Qasas 88)

﴿ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُۥ ۚ لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴾

Thus, his first station is the last one of monotheists, i.e. to see none but Allah Almighty and His acts. He sought refuge with one act from another. Consider how he ended to the Real one and Only, and all things other than Him were removed from his sight. He "peace be upon him" never rose from a station to a higher one but that he saw the former far from the latter. He used then to ask Allah for forgiveness from the former and see it deficiency in his conduct and shortage in his rank. to this he "peace be upon him" referred with his statement: "The (stain of evil) is accumulated on my heart that I ask Allah for forgiveness seventy times per day and night." He thus raised up seventy stations above each other. Although he had, by the first of those, transcended the utmost degree a human being could ever reach, he saw it shortage in comparison with the last of them; and that is the cause of his prayer for forgiveness. When A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" said to him: "Has Allah not forgiven for you your previous and later sins? Then, what is the cause of that weeping in your prostration? And what is the reason for that severe trouble you are suffering?" he "peace be upon him" said: "Then, should I not be a thankful slave?" (Ibn Abu Ash-Shaykh). i.e. should I not ask for more and higher stations? Gratitude causes one to get more as stated by Allah Almighty: "If you are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you." (Ibrahim 7)

﴿ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ ﴾

Now, let's return to the science of practical religion. Let's say that the Prophets "peace be upon them" were sent with the true invitation to call the people to the perfect monotheism, as we have already described it. But between people and that perfect level of monotheism, there is a great distance and there are difficult obstacles in the way. The entire religious law is to show to the people how to cut the great distance and cross those obstacles. At that point, there is another witness and another station, in which there appears, in relation with that witness, the thanksgiving, thankful and thanked. But this could not be clear except through an illustrative example.

Suppose that a king sent to one of his servants who is far from him a vehicle to ride, clothes to wear and provisions to help him cut the distance in order to come close to his presence. In this respect, he has two states: either he wants to bring that servant to his presence in order to serve him; or he has no fortune in him, nor is he in need of his closeness, nor is he affected by his remoteness. But he wants to bring him to his presence in order that the servant would enjoy the happiness of being near him, and benefit with that, and no advantage will return to the king himself. The position of Allah Almighty from all the servants applies to the second state. That is because the first is impossible upon Allah, whereas the second is possible.

On the other hand, the servant would not be regarded thankful to the king in the first state only by riding and arrival at his presence unless he serves him as required. But in the second state, the service is not needed. But at the same time, he is imagined to be thankful or ungrateful. He is thankful in case he

uses what is given to him by his master in what he likes for the benefit of the servant and not for the benefit of the master. He is ungrateful in case he uses that not, or uses it in what alienates him more from the king. If the servant puts on the clothes and rides the horse, and consumes the provisions on the way, his master would appreciate his conduct for he will have used his gifts in his love, i.e. in what he loves for his servant and not for his own self. If he neither puts on the clothes, nor rides the horse to come closer or farther, he will have been ungrateful to his master's favor, for he has neglected it and made it idle.

Similarly, Allah Almighty created the creation and in the beginning of their life, they use appetites in order to complete therewith the building of their bodies. But once they do so, they come farther from His presence, given that their real happiness and felicity lie in their closeness to Him. For this reason, He gave them of favors what they could use to attain the rank of closeness. In reference to their closeness and remoteness, Allah Almighty said: " We have indeed created man in the best of moulds, Then do We abase him (to be) the low of the low, Except such as believe and do righteous deeds: for they shall have a reward unfailing." (At-Tin 4-6)

﴿ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ فِىٓ أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَـٰهُ أَسْفَلَ سَـٰفِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

The favors of Allah then are instruments therewith the servant raises up from the level of the lowest of the low. Allah created those favors for the servant to attain therewith the happiness of closeness to Him, given that Allah Almighty is not in need of the servant's closeness. The servant might use those favors in obedience thereby he is thankful to his master, for he complies with what his master loves; or might use them in disobedience, thereby he is ungrateful for he plunges into what his master dislikes and disapproves for him. Indeed, Allah Almighty never approves disbelief and disobedience for His servants. If he makes them idle and uses them not either in obedience or in disobedience, he is also ungrateful for he has wasted these favors.

All that is created in this world is but an instrument in order for the servant to attain therewith the happiness and felicity of the hereafter, and the rank of closeness to Allah Almighty. Every obedient is grateful to the favors of Allah Almighty in so far as he uses the instruments given to him in obedience; and every disobedient is ungrateful and deprived of the love of Allah Almighty in so far as he uses those improperly, or in a way that alienates him farther. Although obedience and disobedience are subject to will, by no means are they determined by love and hate. But nay! How many a desired thing which might be either loved or disliked! The mystery that lies behind all of that is the Divine decree which could not be disclosed to anyone whatsoever. It is by this that the first problem is solved, i.e. if the thanked has no portion, how should thankfulness be given?

The second is also solved thereby: if we do not mean by thanksgiving but that the favor of Allah Almighty is directed in what Allah Almighty loves. If

the favor is directed to the love of Allah by virtue of Allah Almighty, then, the desired goal has been achieved, for your act has been a gift from Allah Almighty, and as you are the place where it lies, He has praised you, and His praise has been a further gift from Him upon you. It is He who has given, and He Who has praised, and one of both His acts has been a cause of doing the other towards the direction of His love, and in both states, a lot of thanks should be given to Him. You are thankful in the sense that you are the place where gratitude lies and not in the sense that you are the cause of gratitude, just as you are described as knowledgeable and Gnostic in the sense that you are the place where knowledge and gnosis lie and not in the sense that you are the cause of both. It has been placed in you by the Divine eternal power which made you deserve to be described as thankful. That is an affirmation of a thing to you and you are a thing. The Creator of things has made you a thing where you had been nothing at all. In consideration of Him Who has made things, you are a thing (made by Him). But without that consideration, you are nothing. To this fact he "peace be upon him" referred in his statement: "Do deeds for everyone finds it easy on him to do what is created for him." He indeed said so in reply to the question: "O Messenger of Allah! What is the significance of work since Allah had finished from creating and ordaining things?"

From this it seems that the creatures are beings on whom the will of Allah Almighty is executed, and places where His acts lie, although they themselves are among His acts. But some of His acts are places of others. His statement "Do deeds", being on the tongue of the Messenger "peace be upon him", is also one of His acts. It is the cause that led the people to know that their deed is beneficial; and their knowledge is one of the acts of Allah. Knowledge is a cause by which movement towards obedience arises; and arising is also one of the acts of Allah Almighty. It is a cause of the movement of the organs, which is, in turn, one of the acts of Allah Almighty. Some of acts of Allah then are causes of others, i.e. they are conditions for each other to happen, just as the creation of the body is a cause of the creation of the accident, the creation of life is a cause of the creation of knowledge, and the creation of knowledge is a cause of the creation of will, and so forth. All are the acts of Allah Almighty, and they are causes and conditions of each other. They are so in the sense that none is ready to accept life but a body, and none is ready to accept knowledge but a living, and none is ready to accept will but one of knowledge, and so on. In that sense some of His acts are causes of others and not in the sense that they cause each other to exist. Once this is realized as it should be, it raises one up to the level of monotheism as we have already described.

But you may argue: "Why has Allah Almighty commanded us to work otherwise we would be punished and blamed for disobedience, given that the matter is not up to us? How should be blamed and criticized when all things return in the end to Allah Almighty?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that this command of Allah Almighty is a cause of our belief, and our belief is a cause which arouses fear; and fear is a cause that prompts us to abandon desires

and lusts, which, in turn, is a cause of our coming close to Allah Almighty. Allah Almighty is the causer of causes in such order as we see them. So, he, to whom happiness is doomed, finds those causes easy on him until he is led by their chain to the Garden. That is the significance of the statement of the Prophet "peace be upon him": "Everyone finds it easy on him to do what he is created to do." But he, to whom no good is doomed from Allah Almighty, keeps himself far from the speech of Allah Almighty and of His Messenger "peace be upon him" and of the learned scholars; and if he does not hear, he will not know anything, and if he does not learn anything, he will entertain no fear, and if he entertains no fear, he will not abandon desires, and rather will rely on this world, and if he relies on this world, he will remain in the party of Satan; and the fire of Hell is the promise of them all.

Having known this, you would be amazed by a people being led to the Garden by chains. There is none but that he will be led to the Garden by the chain of causes, by virtue of directing knowledge and fear on him. Likewise, there is no disappointed one but that he will be led to the fire of Hell by the chain of causes, by virtue of directing heedlessness, deception and feeling of safety on him. The pious will be driven to the Garden by oppression, and the criminals to the fire of Hell also by oppression; and there is no oppressor but Allah, the One and Only, the Irresistible, and none has the power over all things but the King. When the veils are lifted from the eyes of the heedless, and they will see the matter as such, at that point they will hear the caller calling: " Whose will be the Dominion that Day? That of Allah, the One, the Irresistible!" (Ghafir 16)

﴿ لِّمَنِ ٱلْمُلْكُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۖ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

Of a surety, the dominion belongs to Allah perpetually, but the heedless will not hear that except on that day. So, it is a statement of the disclosure of the new states of the heedless, on a day it will be of no profit to them to be disclosed. So, we seek refuge with Allah Most Generous, Most Forbearing from the causes of ignorance and blindness, for they are the causes of destruction.

Explication Of The Difference Between What Allah Likes And What He Dislikes.

It should be known to you that gratitude on the one hand, and ungratefulness on the other hand could not be achieved unless one knows what Allah likes and distinguishes it from what He dislikes. The meaning of gratitude is to use his favors in what He likes; and the meaning of ungratefulness is to use them in what He dislikes. There are two senses by which what is liked by Allah could be distinguished from what is disliked by Him: Hearing which is supported by the Holy Verses and Prophetic narrations and traditions; and the insight of the heart, i.e. the vision with the eye of consideration. The latter is very difficult and this is why it is rare. For this reason, Allah Almighty sent the Messengers and Prophets, through whom He made the path easy on the people. The knowledge of that is based on learning all rulings and judgements of Sharia

pertinent to all acts of people. Whoever does not get acquainted with all rulings of Sharia in all of his acts could not be able to do the required gratitude.

The other is to see with the eye of consideration. It is to perceive the wisdom of Allah that lies behind every existent created by Him. To be sure, He has created nothing in this world but that there is a wisdom lying behind creating it; and that wisdom refers to a certain purpose. That purpose is the beloved. The wisdom is divided into evident and hidden.

The example of the evident is the knowledge that the wisdom which lies behind creating the sun, for instance, is to make day different from night, in order for the day to be as a means of subsistence and night as covering, and the movement to be easy by day and stillness easy at night. This is one and not all of the wisdoms that lie behind creating the sun, for there are countless wisdoms lying behind creating it. The same is true of learning the wisdom that lies behind cloud and rainfall, i.e. in order for the land to split and produce various kinds of vegetation and plants, to provide food for people and fodder for cattle. However, the Qur'an implies a set of glorious wisdoms that befit the understanding of people, apart from the subtle and abstruse ones that are beyond the reach of their minds. Allah Almighty said: " For that We pour forth water in abundance, And We split the earth in fragments, And produce therein Corn, And Grapes and nutritious Plants, And Olives and Dates, And enclosed Gardens, dense with lofty trees, And Fruits and Fodder, For use and convenience to you and your cattle." (Abasa 25-32)

﴿أَنَّا صَبَبْنَا ٱلْمَآءَ صَبًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ شَقًّا ﴿٢٦﴾ فَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَحَدَآئِقَ غُلْبًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَفَٰكِهَةً وَأَبًّا ﴿٣١﴾ مَّتَٰعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَٰمِكُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾﴾

As for the wisdom that lies behind the creation of the planets and stars, it is hidden for the most part to the majority of people. What they could understand is that they adorn the sky, so that the eye would be pleased with looking at them, as referred to by His statement: " We have indeed decked the lower heaven with beauty (in) the stars." (As-Saffat 6)

﴿إِنَّا زَيَّنَّا ٱلسَّمَآءَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِزِينَةٍ ٱلْكَوَاكِبِ ﴿٦﴾﴾

In brief, there are countless wisdoms lying behind every atom created in the universe, with its skies, earths, stars, planets, winds, mountains, metals, oceans, seas, plants, trees, animals, etc. The wisdom in all of this is divided into what is evident and what is hidden. The same is true of the wisdom that lies behind the organs of animals: an example of the evident wisdom is to learn that the eye is created for seeing not for grasping, ear for hearing not for seeing, hand for grasping not for hearing, foot for walking not for touching, and so forth. But as for the internal organs like intestines, stomach, liver, kidney, veins, nerves, muscles, etc, with their cavities and folds, not all the people know the wisdom that lies behind all of them; and even those who know it know only a little thereof in comparison with what is within the knowledge of Allah Almighty as confirmed by His statement: "of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)" (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

Thus, whoever uses any favor improperly or in that for which it is not created is indeed ungrateful to the favor of Allah Almighty on him. Whoever, for instance, beats another with his hand is indeed ungrateful to the favor of the hand for the hand is created only to avert from oneself what harms him and get what benefits him, and not to harm others. Whoever looks at the face of him who is unlawful for him to look at is indeed ungrateful to the favors of both the eye and the sun with which seeing is realized, for both are created in order for one to look at what benefits him in his religion and world, and ward off what harms him in them. Once he does so, he has used them improperly or in that for which they are not created.

That is because the creation of the creatures and the creation of this world with its means and causes is intended for man to seek their aid to reach the presence of Allah Almighty; and he could not reach without His love and intimacy with him in this world, and desertion from the deception and conceit of this world; and there is no intimacy but with the permanent and regular supplication; and there is no love but with the permanent knowledge that is obtained from the regular meditation; and one could not persist in supplication and meditation without the survival of the body; and the body could not survive but with food; and the food is not produced but from the earth, water and air; and all of this could not be realized but with the creation of the heavens and the earth and all things in existence.

All of this is for the sake of the body which is, in turn, the riding mount of the soul. What will return to Allah Almighty in the end is the satisfied soul that is pleased with the long worship and gnosis. For this reason, Allah Almighty said: " I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me. No Sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed Me. For Allah is He Who gives (all) Sustenance, - Lord of Power - steadfast (forever)." (Adh-Dhariyat 56-58)

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَآ أُرِيدُ مِنْهُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَن يُطْعِمُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلرَّزَّاقُ ذُو ٱلْقُوَّةِ ٱلْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾ ﴾

Whoever uses a favor in disobedience of Allah Almighty is ungrateful to the favors of Allah in all the means which are necessary for man to commit that disobedience.

Now, let's mention one of the hidden wisdoms which is not, anyway, among the most hidden ones, to consider and learn thereby the way of gratitude and ingratitude to favors. Among the favors of Allah Almighty is His creation of Dirhams and Dinars, which are stones, and there is no benefit in themselves as concrete bodies. But the people are forced to get them in terms of the need of everyone to have more things to gain his food, clothes, residence, etc. one might not have what he needs and possess what he needs not, like him who possesses saffron and needs a camel to ride, or him who possesses a camel and needs saffron, and so on. Thus, compensation is required between them, and the extent

of compensation needs evaluation, for the owner of the camel could not give his camel entirely for the whole quantity of saffron, and there is no resemblance between the camel and saffron in order that he would be given the like of it in form and weight.

Similarly, he who purchases a house for a dress, a servant for a footwear, baking powder for a donkey, etc: there is no resemblance nor relevance between those things. One could hardly know how much saffron a camel is. In this way, the dealings would become very difficult. So, those disparate unequal concrete bodies are in need of a mediator to judge between them with justice and distinguish each according to its characteristic status and position until when they are put in order according to their different positions, the equal would be known and distinguished from the unequal.

Both Dirhams and Dinars then are created by Allah Almighty as mediators between the different commodities, in order for these goods to be estimated and evaluated by them, like saying: this camel is equal to one hundred Dinars, and that amount of saffron is equal to one hundred Dinars, and as they get the same evaluation, they then are equal in value. This is possible only through currency, and that is the purpose from creating it, and there is no other purpose in those coins in terms of their being concrete bodies. They are created by Allah Almighty in order to be in circulation among the people as mediators to judge between goods and commodities with justice.

There is another wisdom from creating them, i.e. to have access, through them, to all things in the world. They are not so much, and since they have the same relation with all things, whoever possesses them seems as if he possesses all things, unlike him who possesses a garment: he does not possess but that garment and no more, and if he needs food, it may be that the owner of food will have no desire for the garment. Thus, there is a need for a thing, i.e. the currency, which is, in its form, nothing at all, but in meaning, it represents all things. The relation of a thing to the different things is the same if it does not get its meaning from its particular form, like the mirror which has no color, but, at the same time, it shows all colours in it. Similarly, the currency has no purpose in its own form, but at the same time, through it all purposes are achieved, and also the letter has no meaning in its form, but with it the meanings appear. That is the other wisdom.

There are other wisdoms and it will be too lengthy to mention them all. Anyway, whoever does with them anything in opposition to the wisdom and purpose for which they are created, is ungrateful to the favor of Allah concerning them. Whoever hoards them, for instance, is unjust to them, since he makes idle the wisdom of Allah regarding them, and becomes like him who detains the judge of Muslims in a prison in which he fails to judge between Muslims. That is because if money is hoarded up, its judgement will be lost, and thus the purpose intended by creating it will not be achieved. The Dirhams and Dinars are not created for a particular person apart from others: but they are created to be in circulation among men, as judges on the basis of which the value of things is known and things accordingly distinguished.

Allah Almighty told those who fail to read the Divine lines, that are

written in the pages of the existents with a Divine script with neither a letter nor a voice, and thus is beyond the reach of the ordinary eye since it is perceived only by the insight: He told those incapable with a speech they heard from His Messenger "peace be upon him" until it reached them through letter and voice, the meaning which they already failed to perceive, saying: " And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allah: announce unto them a most grievous penalty. On the Day when heat will be produced out of that (wealth) in the fire of Hell, and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, "This is the (treasure) which you buried for yourselves: taste you, then, the (treasures) you buried!"" (At-Tawbah 34-35)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ ٱلذَّهَبَ وَٱلْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ ۖ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا۟ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾

Similarly, whoever takes utensils from gold or silver is indeed ungrateful to the favor of Allah concerning them, and his state is worse than him who bury them, for his example is like him who uses the judge in such works as sewing, collecting taxes, and the jobs done by the lowest of people; and imprisonment is better for him than that. That is because iron, copper, lead, and pottery do the same job of keeping the liquid even better than gold and silver. Whoever does not get this fact revealed to him, it would be disclosed to him with the Divine interpretation with the statement: "He, who drinks in a utensil made of gold or silver seems as if he drags the fire of Hell in his belly." (both sheikhs on the authority of Umm Salamah).

Likewise, whoever deals with Dirhams and Dinars on usurious basis is indeed ungrateful to the favor of Allah concerning them for they are created not for their own selves but for other things to be obtained through them. So, if trade is practiced on them, they will be taken as ends in themselves, in opposition to the wisdom of creating them. It is out of injustice to use currency improperly or in anything different from that for which it is created to use. Whoever has a garment, for example, and has no money might not be able to buy food or a riding mount by it, for food and the riding mount might not be sold by garment. In this way, he is excusable to sell the garment for money in order to get through that money the food or the riding mount. They are then a means to others, and not ends in themselves.

Their position in relation to goods and commodities is like the position of a letter in relation to speech, described by the grammarians as that which comes to give meaning for anything other than it, or like the position of a mirror in relation to the colours. But he who has currency and it is available to him to sell it for currency alike, limiting thereby the end of dealing to money only, with the result that the currency remains detained with him, it will be unjust, like putting the judge or the ruler in prison and hindering him from judging between the people. Indeed, it is of no significance to sell currency for currency unless it is taken to be saved; and it is out of injustice.

But you may ask: "Why it is possible to sell one currency, say a Dirham, with another, say a Dinar, and not to sell it with the same kind, i.e. a Dirham with a Dirham?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that both differ in the

purpose of getting things, in the sense that it might be easy to obtain with a great quantity of Dirhams many scattered things, which is difficult to be obtained by a little quantity of Dinars, regardless of their possible equality in value. Thus, if Dirhams are prevented, the purpose intended by them might be negatively affected, i.e. the availability to obtain through them many things scattered about. But to sell a Dirham with a Dirham is impermissible in the sense that no intelligent might have the desire to do so particularly if both are equal, and no trader is imagined to do it for it is insignificant. It is like putting the Dirham on the ground and then taking it once again. Indeed, we fear not for the intelligent to spend their time in putting the Dirhams on the ground and taking them once again, unless one of them is better than the other. But this case also is unimaginable for the owner of a good Dirham is not expected to leave his for a bad one, and if he demands more of the bad Dirhams in order to equalize his good one, it should be prevented, and rather judged that the good and bad are equal, for good and badness should be regarded in case the things are intended for themselves, and what is not intended for itself should be regarded only in relation with others. But it is out of injustice to exchange Dirhams for Dirhams that differ in quality until such quality becomes the purpose intended, though it should not be considered so. But in case a Dirham is exchanged for another Dirham like it in quality and value, but on credit, it should be impermissible, for none does so except a tolerant generous one who likes to do good in the loan, and it is a good deed from him for which he should receive praise and reward. But such praise and reward vanish with compensation and this is why it is injustice for it wastes the particular quality of tolerance and deals with it improperly.

Similarly, the different kinds of food are created only as nourishment and provision or as medicine for the creatures. So, they should not be turned from their sphere. But dealings on them constrains them in a limited number of hands, and impedes them from their vital role of being eaten. Indeed, Allah did not create food but to be eaten. The need for food is very dire. So, it should be taken from the hands of those who are not in need of it, and given to those who need it. To be sure, none makes dealings on food but he who is not in need of it. Whoever has food, why does he not eat it if he needs it? Why does he make it one of the commodities to be traded with? And in case he makes it one of the commodities to be traded with, let him sell it for compensation he needs other than food. But he who sells it for the same kind of food seems as if he has not in need of it. For this reason, the Sharia, through many Prophetic narrations, sends curses upon the monopolizer of food, as we have already mentioned in the Book of the Etiquettes of Earning. It is true that he who sells dates for wheat is excusable for each has its purpose which is different from the other, but he who sells a Sa' of wheat for another and equal Sa' of wheat is inexcusable for he is jesting and playing, and this is why there is no need to be prevented. It is not imagined unless there is disparity between both in the quality, and to be sure, the owner of the good does not approve to sell his with an equal quantity of the bad one. But the good might be sold for its twice of the bad. But since

food is essential, and the good is equal to the bad in the origin of the benefit, and differs from it in the points of blessedness, Sharia cancelled out the purpose of blessedness in what sustains the life of beings. That is the wisdom of Sharia that lies behind the prohibition of usury. It belongs to jurisprudence.

That is only one example for the hidden wisdom that lies behind the creation of currency. So, let the gratitude and ingratitude of the favor be considered according to it. Anything that is created for a certain wisdom should not be turned from it; and none does so but he who knows the wisdom, and whoever is given wisdom has indeed been given much good. But even, the gems of wisdom could by no means occur to hearts which are trashes of desires and lusts, and playgrounds of devils. That is because none remembers but those endued with sound minds. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Had it been for the fact that devils hover round the hearts of mankind, they would have been able to see the dominion of the heaven."

Having known that example, you should measure on its basis your movement and stillness, speech and silence, and in short, all of your deeds and words: they might be either gratitude or ingratitude and nothing else. Some of those, according to religious jurisprudence, belong to what is undesirable in part, and some to what is dangerous in part. But all is dangerous in the sight of the masters of hearts.

Let me say, for example, that if you clean your private parts with your right hand after responding to the call of nature, you will have been ungrateful to the favor of both hands. Allah Almighty created to you both hands, and made one of them stronger than the other. The stronger (i.e. the right) then deserves to be more honored and preferred to the weaker. But to prefer the weaker is injustice; and Allah Almighty enjoins but justice. Then, He Who gave you both hands, made you in need of doing many works, some of which are noble, like taking the Mushaf, and some ignoble like removing the filth after responding to the call of nature. If you take the Mushaf with the left hand, and remove the filth with the right, you will have then assigned the ignoble to the noble, and the noble to the ignoble. By so doing, you will deviate from justice.

Similarly, if you spit on your right side or on the direction of Qiblah, or if you face the Qiblah while responding to the call of nature, you will have been ungrateful to the favor of Allah concerning the creation of directions and dimensions of the world. He Almighty created the directions to be the dimensions of your movement. Then, He divided the directions into what is not honoured, and what is honoured by His House (the Ka'bah), which He placed in order to attract your heart towards it, and set firm your body to it as being your Qiblah during worship. Similarly, your deeds are divided into the noble like the acts of worship, and the ignoble like responding to the call of nature and spitting. Thus, if you spit on the direction of Qiblah, you will have been unjust to it, and ungrateful to the favor of Allah Almighty concerning the Qiblah, with which your worship is perfect. Likewise, if you put on your footwears, starting with the left, you will have been unjust. That is because the footwear protects man and thus

man has a fortune in it, and in fortunes, one should begin with what is more honoured, for that is the justice and fulfillment of wisdom, and the opposite is injustice and ingratitude to the favor of the footwear and the foot itself.

This is regarded a major sin in the sight of Gnostics, although no more than an undesirable act according to religious jurisprudents. One of those Gnostics once collected a great quantity of wheat and started to give it in charity. When he was asked about that he said: "Once I put on my sandals, and forgetfully started with the left one. So, I liked to atone it with charity." It is true that the religious jurisprudent could hardly aggravate the matter in such affairs, for he is poor, and it is difficult on him to reform the laymen who are close in their degree to cattle, and dipped in layers of darkness, too deep to describe as offenses in comparison with those affairs. It is ugly, to say, for example, that he, who drank wine and took the vessel with his left hand, has committed two transgressions: one is drinking alcoholic drink, and the other is the taking with the left hand. It is also ugly to say that he, who sold wine at the time of Adhan on Friday, has indeed committed two treacheries: one is selling wine and the other is selling at the time of Adhan on Friday. Likewise, if one responded to the call of nature in the praying place of the mosque, making the Qiblah on his back, it will be ugly to be described as having abandoned the etiquettes of responding to the call of nature, by not making the Qiblah on his right side (in comparison with his doing so in the praying place of the mosque).

However, all sins are but layers of darkness over each other, in such a way that some (i.e. the trivial) are hidden by others (i.e. the more significant). The master, for instance, might punish his slave if the latter used his knife without his permission. But if he killed by that knife the dearest of his sons, his using it without permission would not become effective (or significant in comparison with the killing). In short, all of etiquettes and proprieties observed by the Prophets and saints in which we have indulged in religious jurisprudence as regards the laymen is due to that necessity, otherwise, all those undesirable acts are injustice and ingratitude to the favors of Allah Almighty, and deficiency in the degrees of closeness of the servant (to Allah Almighty). Some of them negatively affect the servant as reflected in the reduction of the degree of closeness and degradation of rank, others turn him entirely from the sphere of closeness, down to the world of remoteness which is the residence of devils.

In addition, if a man broke a branch from a tree with no dire necessity, he would be ungrateful to the favors of creating the tree as well as the hand. As for the hand, it is not created for useless playing in so much as for obedience (of Allah), and doing all works and acts that help achieve that obedience. As for trees, Allah Almighty created them, and created for them stalks and branches, and drove the water to sustain them, and created in them the power of growth until when they attain maturity, they become of benefit for the servants. To break a tree then before attaining its maturity with no benefit is to oppose the purpose of wisdom and deviate from justice. But if there is a correct purpose from breaking the branch, it will be right, since trees and animals are made to serve the purposes of men. Both are perishable, and to

consume the lower for the sake of the survival of the higher even for some time is closer to justice than to lose them all. To this fact Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: behold, in that are Signs indeed for those who reflect." (Al-Jathiyah 13)

﴿ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأَيَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴾

It is true that if he breaks that branch from a tree owned by another, he will be wrongful, even if there is a dire necessity for that. That is because each tree could, by no means, satisfy the needs of all servants of Allah Almighty. But each satisfies the need of certain individual or group. If one takes it up without preponderance or without its being assigned to him, it will be injustice. The one to whom it is assigned is he who planted it, by bringing and then sowing the seed in the ground, driving the water to it, and kept looking after it until it grew. So, he is more entitled to own it. But if a tree grows in a dead land with no human help or interference, then, another kind of assignment should be sought, i.e. the one who preceded to get it, in which case, the precedent shall have the privilege of precedence. Justice then requires that he should be more entitled to get it.

That preponderance is what the religious jurisprudents call ownership. But ownership is a figurative expression, for the real ownership belongs to the King of all kings, to Whom do belong all that is in the heavens and that is on earth. How should a servant be an owner given that he does not have real ownership over himself? That is because he is owned by another (i.e. Allah). It is true that all people are but servants of Allah Almighty, and the earth is the repast of Allah; and He has given them permission to eat of His repast as much as they need. It is like the king who sets up a repast for his servants to eat thereof. If one takes a morsel with his right hand and catches hold of it with his fingers, and then another servant comes and wants to take it, it will not be possible for him, not because the morsel has become in his ownership by his taking it with his hand, for he and his hand are owned by Allah Almighty, but because each morsel could, by no means, satisfy the need of all servants, and this is why justice requires assignment by way of preponderance and specification, and taking is a kind of specification which prevents anyone from taking what is not specified to him.

It is in this context that you should understand the command of Allah Almighty concerning His servants. For this reason, we say that whoever takes from the property and wealth of this world what is beyond his need and then hoards it up, while there are other servants of Allah who are in need of it, he is indeed wrongful and is one of those who bury gold and silver, and spend them not in the Way of Allah Almighty. The Way of Allah is to obey Him, and the usage of property in this world to provide for the sustenance of the people is an aspect of His obedience, for with wealth, their needs are satisfied. But this is beyond the limit of juristic fatwas, for the needs are too abstruse to measure, and the people differ in their feelings of poverty and ways of reception, and the ends of lifetimes are unknown.

To oblige the laymen to do so is like to oblige the children to adhere to

solemnity, reverence and silence from useless speech. But, as immature, they could not endure it. So, we did not object to their play and amusement, but that we make it permissible for them does not mean that play and amusement are right. Similarly, that we make permissible for the laymen to preserve property, and spend thereof as much as enables them to fulfill the obligatory charity, and this is due to the stinginess to which they are predisposed by nature, does not mean that it is right. To this fact the Holy Qur'an refers as shown from the statement of Allah Almighty: " If He were to ask you for all of them, and press you, you would covetously withhold, and He would bring out all your ill-feeling." (Muhammad 37)

﴿ إِن يَسْـَٔلْكُمُوهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبْخَلُوا۟ وَيُخْرِجْ أَضْغَـٰنَكُمْ ﴾

But the perfect right and justice require that none among the servants of Allah Almighty should take from the property of Allah Almighty more than the rider's provision. All of Allah's servants are riders and their riding mounts are their bodies on their journey to the presence of Allah (in the hereafter). Whoever takes what is beyond his need and then withholds it from another rider who is in need of it is, indeed, wrongful and unjust, and nonobservant of the purpose of the wisdom for which the property is created, and ungrateful to the favor of Allah Almighty on him through the Qur'an and the Messenger "peace be upon him", reason and all means by which he knew that what is beyond the rider's provision is harmful to him in the world and the hereafter.

Whoever understands the wisdom of Allah Almighty that lies behind all the existents is able to undertake the duty of gratitude. But to survey that needs huge volumes which, therefore, could do but little. However, we have mentioned that amount in order to prove the truthfulness of the statement of Allah Almighty: "but few of My servants are grateful!" (Saba' 13)

﴿ وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِىَ ٱلشَّكُورُ ﴾

And the happiness of Iblis the cursed about His statement: " nor will You find, in most of them, gratitude (for Your mercies)." (Al-A'raf 17)

﴿ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَـٰكِرِينَ ﴾

None understands the meaning of the Holy Verse without knowing all of this, in addition to so many others, whose survey is beyond the limit of the entire lifetime. Of course I do not mean the linguistic explanation of the Holy Verse which is familiar to anyone who is skilled in language.

You may argue: "All that you have mentioned means that Allah Almighty has wisdom that lies behind all things He created; and that He caused some acts of servants to perfect that wisdom until it achieves its purpose, and others to hinder it. That is, every act that agrees with the wisdom and helps it achieve its purpose is gratitude, and every act that disagrees with it and impedes the causes to reach their ends is ingratitude. This is understandable. But there is still a problem, i.e. that the act of servants which is divided into what perfects the wisdom and what impedes it, is, in itself, produced by Allah Almighty. Then, how should a servant be grateful once and ungrateful once?"

In reply to that, it should be known to you that the answer of that stems from

a huge current of the science of Disclosure (Mukashafah); and we have referred to some features thereof. Now, let's express that in brief which is understood by him who learns the language of birds and rejected by him who knows it not. Allah Almighty, in His Glory and Supremacy, has an attribute from which all the creation spring, I mean an attribute which is beyond the limit of linguistic expression. In view of its glory and uniqueness, no linguistic expression in this world has ever been found to describe it. For this reason, these of language, failing to refer to it with any linguistic term, fell short of seeing it in the same way as the sights of bats fail to see sunlight, not because it is cloudy but because of the weakness of the sights of bats. But those whose sights are opened to perceive that attribute were forced to borrow from the world of language a term to designate, even weakly, something of its facts. This term is the 'power'. We thus dared to use that borrowed term saying:

Allah Almighty has an attribute, i.e. the power from which creation and invention spring. The creation in existence is divided into many divisions. As regards their division, another term, for the same necessity we have referred to above, has been borrowed to designate another attribute, i.e. the 'will'. However, as well as the term 'power' is short of fathoming the real nature and fact of the attribute which it designates, the same is true of the term 'will'. Then, the acts that spring from the power are divided into what succeeds to achieve the required purpose, i.e. the wisdom, and what is hindered from achieving the desired purpose. Each of those is related to the attribute of 'will', in view of the distinctive characteristics it has on the basis of which the division is made. Thus, for such of acts as succeeds to achieve its purpose, the term 'love' is borrowed, and for what fails to achieve its purpose, the term 'dislike' is borrowed. Both are included in description of the will. But each has another characteristic which is beyond the description of the terms 'love' and 'dislike'.

Similarly, the servants of Allah, who are among His creation and invention, are divided into such as doomed, by the eternal will, to be used to hinder the wisdom of Allah from achieving its purpose, by way of oppression, and directing causes and means over them, and such as doomed, by eternal will, to be used to drive His wisdom to achieve its desired goal. Each of both parties then is related to the will in a particular way. For those used for the wisdom of Allah to be perfect through them, the term 'pleasure' is borrowed, and for those used to hinder the wisdom of Allah from achieving its purpose the term 'anger' is borrowed. On those with whom He grew angry in eternity, an act appears with which the wisdom of Allah is hindered; and for such the term 'ingratitude' is borrowed, followed by curse and wrath out of punishment; and on those with whom He was pleased in eternity, an act with which the wisdom is driven to achieve its desired goal, and for such the term 'gratitude' is borrowed, followed by praise and commendation, out of pleasure and approval. The result is that He Almighty gave beauty and praised for it, and gave punishment and then defaced and ruined for it.

Its example is that a king cleans his dirty servant and removes the dirt

from him and then dresses him in a beauty and smart dress, and once he completes his adornment he says to him: "O pretty man! How pretty are you, and how smart is your dress, and how clean is your face!" the king in reality is the maker of beauty and the praiser of it at the same time. He is the praiser in all states in a way as if he praises none but himself, and the servant is only the apparent object of praise.

As such things were in eternity, and as such goes the sequence of causes and causers by determination and decree of the Lord of all things, the Causer and Founder of all causes. All of this is subject to His will, wisdom, true judgement and decisive command, for which the term 'fate' is borrowed. It is said that it is but a single (Act), like the twinkling of an eye, if not shorter, from which the oceans of decreed things have flowed with what was doomed to be; and for the sequence of those decreed things, as resulting from each other, the term 'Divine decree' is borrowed. Thus, the term 'fate' describes the single comprehensive command, and the term 'Divine decree' describes the details of things to happen perpetually.

It is said that nothing is outside the fate and Divine decree. For this reason, some servants wondered why the division required those details, and how justice was observed with such disparity and giving superiority to some over others. As some failed to fathom the mystery that lies behind this issue, they could not help abstain from delving into it, and they were told to keep silent, for " He cannot be questioned for His acts, but they will be questioned (for theirs)." (Al-Anbiya 23)

﴿ لَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴾

The niche of some of them was filled with light, springing from the light of Allah in the heavens and the earth. Their Oil was first pure, well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it. But when fire touched it, it flamed in Light upon Light. The result is that the sides of the dominion of the invisibles shone in front of them by the light of their Lord therewith they perceived the matters as they really are.

But they were told to discipline themselves with the etiquettes of Allah Almighty, and keep silent; and "whenever the Divine decree is mentioned, abstain from speaking in that, for you are surrounded by people who are weak in sight. So, go on and uncover not the sunlight to the sights of bats lest you would contribute in their destruction. So, behave in accordance with the good manners of Allah Almighty, and descend from the dominion of the invisibles to the world of visibles, so that the weak would be intimate with you, and get from the remaining of your light that is rising from behind your veil, in the same way as bats get from the remaining of the light of sun and the other stars at night, therewith they live in a way that befits them, and not a complete life of him who moves in the light of sun."

As such was the beginning and end of that matter. You could not understand it unless you are fitting for it. If you are fitting for it, your eye would be opened to see it, and once your eye is opened, you would need not a leader to lead you. It is true that the blind might be led by another, but when the road becomes so

much narrow, sharper than the sword and thinner than the hair, the bird becomes just able to fly over it, but not to drag a blind behind him. If it is a water path, only the skilled swimmer would be able to cross it, but without drawing anyone behind him. Those are matters proceeding on which in relation to the audience and majority of laymen is like to proceed on water in comparison with proceeding on the ground. Although swimming could be learnt, by no means would walking on water be learnt: but it is acquired by the power of certainty of faith. For this reason, it was said to the Prophet "peace be upon him": "It is said that Jesus "peace be upon him" walked on the water." On that he said: "If he advanced in certainty (of faith) more, he would have been able to walk on the air."

Those are but references and hints to what is intended by love and dislike, pleasure and displeasure, gratitude and ingratitude. Nothing more thereof is fitting for the science of practical religion. Allah Almighty set for an example to illustrate the matter to the minds of people, when He said that He did not create men and jinn but to worship Him. Thus, their worship of Him was the final wisdom from creating them. Then, He told that He has two servants: He loves one of them called Gabriel, the Holy Spirit, the Honest. He is loved, obeyed, trustworthy and strong. He dislikes the other called Iblis, i.e. the cursed who is given respite to the Day of Judgement. Then, He turned the matter of guiding to Gabriel as shown from His statement: " Say, the Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from your Lord in Truth, in order to strengthen those who believe, and as a Guide and Glad Tidings to Muslims." (An-Nahl 102)

﴿ قُلْ نَزَّلَهُۥ رُوحُ ٱلْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

And: "by His Command does He send the spirit (of inspiration) to any of His servants He pleases, that it may warn (men) of the Day of Mutual Meeting." (Ghafir 15)

﴿ يُلْقِى ٱلرُّوحَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِۦ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ لِيُنذِرَ يَوْمَ ٱلتَّلَاقِ ﴾

He turned the temptation and misleading to Iblis as shown from His statement: "Thus misleading others from Allah's Path." (Az-Zumar 8)

﴿ أَندَادًا لِّيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ﴾

The temptation is to hinder the servants from attaining the end of wisdom. Consider then how temptation is attributed to the servant with whom He grew angry, and guidance, which is the way to attain the end, to the servant whom He loved.

There is an example for that from the ordinary life. If a king needs somebody to give him drink and another to cup him, clean the house and remove the dirt from it; and at the same time he has only two servants: the more ugly of them would be given the assignment of cupping and cleaning the house, whereas the better and dearer of them to himself would be given the assignment of providing him with drink. You should not attribute any of acts to yourself, for it is He Who causes you to assign the hateful act to the hateful person, and the lovable act to

the lovable person, in order to perfect justice. His justice sometimes is done by things in which you have no share, and sometimes through yourself, for you are but one of His acts. Your causes, power, knowledge, work, and all things you do are His act which He arranged in you justly in a way that from which proportionate acts and works spring. But since you see but yourself, you think, though falsely, that what appears on you in the world of visibles has no reason from the dominion of invisibles; and this is why you attribute the act to yourself.

Your example is like the child who watches at night the play of a sorcerer, who brings out pictures from behind a screen, dancing, crying and moving. They are composed of lifeless and motionless pieces of cloth, that are moved by thin and fine threads which are not visible in the darkness of night, whose heads are in the hand of the sorcerer, who is hidden from the sights of children. The children rejoice and wonder, thinking those pieces of cloth dance and move by themselves, unlike the rational mature who know that they are moved and do not move by themselves. But perhaps they do not know the details and even those who know some of its details does not know it completely as the sorcerer himself who manages and does it knows it.

The same is true of the children among the inhabitants of this world. All the people are children in comparison with the learned. They look at those persons and think that they move by themselves, thereupon they turn the movement to them, unlike the learned who know that they are moved and do not move by themselves. But they might not know how they are moved. This is the case of the majority of learned. But the Gnostics and those well-established in knowledge perceived with their sharp insights those spider threads, if not finer, hanging down from the sky with their ends clinging to the persons on earth, and in view of their minuteness, they are not perceived by the apparent sights. Then, in a later stage, they perceived the heads of those threads having their handles in the hands of angels who move the heavens. They also watched the angels of heaven directing themselves to the carriers of the Throne (of Authority), in expectation of such of commands as descend on them from the Presence of the Lord, in order not to disobey the command of Allah, and do what they are commanded to do. Those contemplations are referred to in the Qur'an by His saying: " And in heaven is your Sustenance, as (also) that which you are promised." (Adh-Dhariyat 22)

﴿ وَفِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

As for the angels' expectation of the command of Allah Almighty, it is referred to in the following statement: "Allah is He Who created seven Firmaments and of the earth a similar number. Through the midst of them (all) descends His Command: that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah comprehends all things in (His) Knowledge." (At-Talaq 12)

﴿ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَـٰوَٰتٍ وَمِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ ٱلْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًۢا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

The interpretation of those matters is known only by Allah Almighty, and

those well-established in knowledge (are caused by Allah to know that). Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" referred to the specialty of these well-established in knowledge in sciences that are beyond the reach of the minds of the ordinary people. He recited the statement of Allah Almighty: " Through the midst of them (all) descends His Command..." and then commented: "Were I to mention to you all I know about the meaning of this statement, you would surely stone me to death (or "you would ascribe me to disbelief", according to another version)." At that point, let's be satisfied with what we have mentioned, by which we have transcended the real nature of the science of practical religion to the science of Disclosure.

Let's return to the purposes of gratitude. If the real nature of gratitude in the end is to use a servant to perfect the wisdom of Allah Almighty, the most thankful among the servants is the dearest to Allah Almighty, and the nearest to Him; and the nearest to Allah are the angels, who are classified according to different ranks, and everyone of them has a specific station. the nearest among them is Israfil "peace be upon him". Their high rank and nearness are due to their honor and piety. With them, Allah Almighty communicated the Prophets "peace be upon them", the noblest of creatures on the surface of the earth. The Prophets are good in themselves. With them, Allah Almighty guided the people, and perfected His wisdom. The one of the highest rank among them is our Prophet Muhammad "peace be upon him", with whom Allah completed the religion, and concluded the Prophets.

Following them are the religious and learned scholars, the heirs of Prophets (in knowledge). They are righteous in themselves. With them Allah Almighty reformed the people. The degree of each of them is determined by the extent of reforming himself and the people round him. Following them are the just rulers for they reformed the world of people with their justice in the same way as religious scholars reformed their religion. Because religion, kingship and ruling were combined to our Prophet Muhammad "peace be upon him", he was the best of all the Prophets. with him, Allah completed the rightness of their religion and world; and sword and kingship were given to none other than him from among the Prophets. following learned scholars and just rulers are the righteous among the people who made right their religion as well as their own selves only, thereupon the wisdom of Allah Almighty was not perfect through inasmuch as in them. Apart from those mentioned above, all are rabble laymen.

It should be known to you that with the ruler, the religion is established. So, he should not be scorned, even if he is a wrongful wicked. According to Amr Ibn Al-As: "An oppressive ruler is better than a ceaseless affliction." It is narrated on the authority of Umm Salamah "Allah be pleased with her", the wife of The Prophet that The Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” said: “In the near future some commanders will be appointed as rulers over you, and you will approve their good deeds and disapprove of their bad deeds. They would do mischief, but what Allah makes right at their hands would be more. If they do good, they would receive reward, and gratitude would be due on you; and if they do evil, they would incur sin upon themselves, and patience would

become due on you." (Muslim, with a slight variation of wording).

According to Sahl: "Whoever denies his imam, i.e. the ruler, is an atheist; and whomever the imam invites and does not respond to his invitation is a religious innovator; and whoever comes to the ruler without invitation is an ignorant." Once he was asked: "Who among the people is the best?" he said: "The ruler." It was said: "We think that the ruler is the worst of people." On that he said: "Be quiet! Indeed, Allah Almighty looks at him twice per day: one to the safety of the property of Muslims and the other to the safety of their persons. Once (he achieves both) He Almighty considers his scroll and then forgives for him his sins." He used to say: "The pieces of black wood hung at the gates of their houses are better than seventy storytellers relating narrations."

SECOND PILLAR
THE OBJECT OF GRATITUDE

It discusses the real nature, and the general and particular divisions of favor, given that all favors of Allah upon His servants are beyond calculation, as confirmed by Allah Almighty: " But if you count the favours of Allah, never will you be able to number them. Verily, man is given up to injustice and ingratitude." (Ibrahim 34)

﴿ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾

So, we are going to present universal issues as laws in learning the favors, and follow them with some details; and it is Allah who grants success.

Explication Of Real Nature And Divisions Of Favor

It should be known to you that every good, pleasure and happiness, if not every desired thing is called favor. But the real favor is the hereafter happiness. Given anything else the name of happiness is either wrong or figurative, like giving the name of favor to the worldly happiness which assists not for the hereafter: that is evident error. That a particular thing is given the name of favor might be true, but to give the name of favor to the hereafter happiness is more truthful. Every means that helps or causes one to attain the hereafter happiness, either through one or more ways, might be truly named a favor, for it leads to the real favor. Let us then divide the helpful means and pleasures called favor into many kinds of division and explain them as follows:

The first division is that all things in relation with us are divided into what is beneficial in both the world and the hereafter, like knowledge and good manners; what is harmful in both the world and the hereafter like ignorance and bad manners; what is beneficial at the moment, i.e. in this world, and harmful in the hereafter, like taking the pleasure from following the desires and appetites; and what is harmful and painful at the moment and beneficial in the hereafter, like curbing desires and opposing the self. What is beneficial at the moment and in the future is the real favor, with verification, like knowledge and good manners; and what is harmful in both is the real disfavor with verification, like ignorance and bad manners.

What is beneficial at the moment and harmful in the future is an evident

disfavor in the sight of those endued with deep insight and intelligence, although a favor in the sight of the ignorant foolish. Its example is like a hungry person who finds poisoned honey: if he is ignorant of its reality, he would think it a favor; and if he learns its reality, he would know that it is a disfavor driven to him. What is harmful at the moment and beneficial in the future is a favor in the sight of the intelligent, though a disfavor in the sight of the ignorant. Its example is like the medicine of presently bitter sore taste, which is to cure from the ailment in the future. If the ignorant child is obliged to drink it, he would think it a disfavor; whereas the intelligent regards it a favor, and becomes under obligation to him who gives it to him.

That is why the mother, for instance, prevents her child from getting cupped, unlike the father who invites him to it. That is because the father, due to his perfect mind, looks over the good consequence, whereas the mother, due to her excessive emotion and deficiency in mind, sees only the harm at the moment, and the child, due to his ignorance, inclines to appreciate his mother and not his father, and further gets comforted with her pity and considers the father his enemy. But were he to be discerning, he would surely know that his mother is an enemy to him disguised in the form of a friend, for preventing him from cupping would lead him to more painful ailments . However, the ignorant friend is dearer to oneself than the intelligent enemy. Every one is the friend of himself, but an ignorant friend. For this reason, it controls him more than an enemy might do with him.

A second division: It should be known to you that all means and ways in this world are mixed in a way that their good could hardly be distinguishable from their evil. Good could hardly exist in pureness separated from evil. Consider the property, family, children, kinship, majesty, and all means and ways in general. But they could be divided into things whose benefit is more than harm, like the sufficient amount of money and majesty, and all the other means; and things whose harm is more than benefit in relation with the majority of people like much property and large majesty; and things in which benefit and harm are equal, and those differ by the difference of persons: it may be that a righteous man gets benefit from the lawful property and if it is too much, he would spend it in the Way of Allah and on the sides of good, in which case such property is a favor for him; and another man might harm himself even with the little, by making many complaints to his Lord about his displeasure, asking Him for more, in which case, it is a disfavor for him.

A third division: It should be known to you that the good things are divided, by another consideration, into what is preferred for itself only, what is preferred for another only, and what is preferred for itself as well as for another thing.

An example for what is preferred for itself only is the pleasure of looking at the Countenance of Allah Most Generous, and the happiness of meeting Him, or in general, the never-ending happiness of the hereafter: it is not sought in order to have access therewith to another end beyond it. Nay! It is sought only for itself.

An example of the second, which is intended for another thing only, and it is

not intended in itself, is like the Dirhams and Dinars: if the need could be fulfilled without them, surely, they would have become in the same position of the gravel on the ground. But since they are a means to get the pleasures, they have become dear to the ignorant in themselves, to the extent that they came to collect and hoard them, and exchange both on usury basis, thinking currency to be intended in its own self. The example of those ignorant is like him who loves a person, and because of him, he loves his messenger who connects between them, and in the midst of loving the messenger, he forgets gradually his love for the original beloved, with the result that he turns away from him along his lifetime, and rather engages in taking care of the messenger; and that is, to be sure, the utmost ignorance and error.

The third is that which is intended for itself as well as for another thing. Its example is like the health and safety. They are intended for one to be able therewith to remember (Allah) and meditate (His signs), which leads in the end to the meeting with Allah Almighty in the hereafter. But at the same time, they also are intended for their own selves. Man, even if he could dispense with the thing for which the safety is sought, seeks safety in its being safety.

In short, what is preferred for itself only is the real good and favor with verification. What is preferred for itself and for another thing is also a favor, but less in rank than the former. But as for what is preferred only for another thing, like Dinars and Dirhams, they are not described as a favor as being concrete bodies, although, as being a means to get things and fulfill needs, a favor but for him who wants a thing which could not be achieved without them. If his purpose is knowledge and worship, and he has the amount of money which, by a hair's breadth, suffices the necessities of his life, then, gold and stones become equal in his sight, that it is the same to him to possess or lose them. But even, their existence might divert him from worship and meditation, in which case they become a disfavor and not a favor for him.

A fourth division: It should be known to you that the good things, by another consideration, are divided into the beneficial, pleasant and beautiful. The pleasant is that with which one gets comforted at once. The beneficial is that which benefits in the future. The beautiful is that which is regarded good in all states. Likewise, evils are divided into the harmful, ugly and painful. Each of both divisions are of two categories: either absolute or restricted. The absolute is that which combines the three characteristics like, in the case of the good things, knowledge and wisdom: it is beneficial, pleasant and beautiful in the sight of those endued with knowledge and wisdom; or like, in the case of evil things, ignorance, which is harmful, ugly and painful.

That is because the ignorant feels the pain of ignorance once he knows that he is ignorant, by seeing the other as knowledgeable, and himself as ignorant, thereby he perceives the pain of shortage, which arouses in him the pleasant desire for knowledge. But it may be that his envy, arrogance and physical desires impede him from learning, leaving him strained between two opposites, thereby his pain worsens grievously: If he leaves learning, he would be pained by ignorance and perception of shortage; and if he engages in learning, he would be

pained by leaving his physical desires or by leaving arrogance for the humiliation of learning. Such man continues to suffer unrelenting punishment.

The other kind is that which implies some and not all the characteristics, like the painful beneficial. Its example is like cutting off the impaired finger from the sound body. Another is the ugly beneficial like foolishness, which is, though being ugly, beneficial in many cases. It is said: "Relieved has he been who has no mind." That is because he thinks not about the consequence, thereupon he gets comforted at the moment until it is time for his death. Something might be beneficial in part and harmful in part, like throwing the money into the sea when there is fear of sinking: it is harmful in relation with the money, and beneficial for the person himself who might be saved. The beneficial is of two kinds: One is the necessary like faith and good manners as means to drive one to the hereafter happiness. By both I refer to knowledge and work, without which faith is impossible. The other is unnecessary, like the usage of oxymel as a medicine for bile, which might be treated by anything instead.

A fifth division: It should be known to you that the favor refers to every pleasant thing. The pleasures in relation with man as being characterized by them or shares the other creatures in them, are of three kinds: Mental, physical in which he shares some animals, and physical in which he shares all animals.

The first is the mental, like the pleasure of knowledge and wisdom, which are not pleasant to seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting, nor are they to belly and sex. They are pleasant only to the heart for it is characterized by a particular quality referred to as mind. This pleasure, though being the noblest, is the scarcest. Its scarcity is due to the fact that knowledge is not pleasant but to a learned scholar, as well as wisdom but to a wise; and how scarce are the men endued with knowledge and wisdom, and how many are those who claim their qualities and imitate their attributes! Its honor is due to the fact that it is inherent and never vanishes in the world and the hereafter, and permanent of which one never gets bored. Food, once satiates the hungry, becomes boring, and the same is true of the sexual desire. But both knowledge and wisdom are unimaginable to be tedious or wearisome.

If one has the ability to do the noble thing which is permanent and never-ending and then is pleased with the despicable which is perishable, has, to be sure, a mental disorder, and is, due to his wretchedness, deprived of all good. The least thing to be said about it is that knowledge needs not any assistants or guardians, unlike wealth: knowledge safeguards you while you safeguard wealth. Knowledge increases by spending, while wealth decreases by spending. The wealth is apt to be stolen, as well as the office to be taken, unlike knowledge, to which the hands of thieves never stretch, nor could it be taken. The result is that the possessor of knowledge is always in safety and security, unlike the owner of wealth or authority who always lives in unrest and fear. Furthermore, knowledge is always beneficial, pleasant and beautiful in all states, unlike wealth which sometimes leads to destruction and sometimes to salvation. For this reason, Allah Almighty dispraised the wealth many times, and described it as good many times

in the Qur'an.

That most people are short of perceiving the pleasure of knowledge is due to their lack of taste, for whoever does not taste a thing is ignorant of it, and has no longing for getting it, for longing always ensues from taste; or due to their corrupt mood and heart disease as a result of following their desires and lusts, like the ill person who does not perceive the sweetness of honey and feels it bitter in his mouth; or due to the shortage of intelligence, as the quality with which they could get pleasure from knowledge has not yet been created in them, like the infant who could not perceive the pleasure of honey or the flesh of birds, for he still takes pleasure in milk only, given that he relishes not both does not mean that honey and flesh of birds are not pleasant, or that he finds agreeable the milk means that it is the most pleasant of edible things.

Thus, those who are short of perceiving the pleasure of knowledge and wisdom are three kinds: he whose heart never lives like the child; he whose heart dies after life by following desires and lusts; and he who falls ill because of following appetites. Thus, when Allah Almighty says: "In their hearts is a disease; and Allah has increased their disease" (Al-Baqarah 10)

﴿ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مَرَضًا ﴾

He refers to the disease of mind. His statement " That it may give admonition to any (who are) alive" (Ya Sin 70)

﴿ لِّيُنذِرَ مَن كَانَ حَيًّا ﴾

Refers to those whose hearts never live. To be sure, every living in person and dead in heart is regarded among the dead in the Sight of Allah Almighty, though living in the sight of the ignorant. This is why the martyrs are living with their Lord, given their sustenance regularly, regardless of their being dead in person.

The second pleasure is that in which man shares some and not all animals, like the pleasure of authority, supremacy and primacy. The lion, tiger and some other animals share man in that pleasure.

The third is the pleasure in which man shares all animals, i.e. the pleasure of belly and sex. It is the most existing although the most despicable. This is why it is common to all animals, including even the smallest larva. If one rises up a degree, the pleasure of authority and supremacy clings to him in general, and to the heedless and ignorant among men in particular, and a higher degree, he could taste the pleasure of knowledge and wisdom, particularly the knowledge of Allah Almighty, and the knowledge of His attributes and acts; and that is the grade of the sincere affirmers of truth. It is not attained unless the love of authority comes out of the heart. Indeed, the love of authority is the last to come out of the heads after which one turns to be of the sincere affirmers of truth. As for the desires of belly and sex it is easy upon the righteous to curb. But only the sincere affirmers of truth are able to suppress the greed for authority. But to remove the desire of authority entirely is likely beyond the capacity of human beings. It is true that the gnosis of Allah and His attributes and acts might prevail in many states, but not in all states, and it does not remain forever. Some periods of weakness befall the

heart during which the self returns to the normal human characteristics, including such desire, but it is not too strong to entice the heart to leave moderation.

At that point, hearts are divided into four categories: A first heart loves none but Allah Almighty, and gets comforted only with advance in gnosis of and meditation in Him. A second heart does not know the significance of the pleasure of the gnosis of, and intimacy with Allah Almighty: But it gets its pleasure in majesty, authority, wealth and all physical desires. A third heart is that which, for the most part of its states, takes pleasure in gnosis of, intimacy with and meditation in Allah Almighty. But in some states, the normal human desires might befall it. Finally, a fourth heart is that which, for the most part of its states, takes pleasure in normal human desires, and in some states, the pleasure of knowledge might befall him.

As for the first, if it is possible, it is very unlikely. The second is prevailing in the world. As for the third and the fourth, they exist rarely but not seldom. They vary in muchness and littleness by the difference of ages and times. The closer we are in time to the ages of Prophets, the greater in number they are; and the farther we are from the time of Prophets, the less in number they turn to be and so forth until the establishment of the Day of Judgement, where Allah would accomplish a matter already enacted. Its rareness at that time is suitable for it will be the commencement of the dominion of the hereafter, and as the dominion in general is rare, the kings should subsequently be rare too. As well as the excellent in beauty and dominion are very rare, while the normal who are below them represent the majority, the same is true of the dominion of the hereafter, for the world is but a mirror of the hereafter as being the world of visibles, and the hereafter the dominion of invisibles, and the world of visibles always follows the dominion of invisibles just as the image in the mirror follows the picture of the beholder. Although the image in the mirror ranks second in existence, it is the first you see, for you do not see yourself unless you see first your image in the mirror, therewith you recognize yourself.

In other words, the heart that is the second to exist is the first to recognize, and the latter to exist is the earlier to recognize and so on. This is a reversion. But to be sure, both reversion and overturn are necessity in this world (of visibles). The world of visibles imitates the dominion of invisibles. Some people, upon whom it is made easy to look at that world by consideration, do not see a thing in the world of visibles but that they cross therewith to the dominion of the invisibles. This is commanded by Allah in His statement: "Take warning, then, O you with eyes (to see)!" (Al-Hashr 2)

﴿ فَٱعْتَبِرُوا۟ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ۝ ﴾

Others have their insight blind thereupon they do not receive admonition nor warning, and rather are constrained in this narrow world of visibles, and their prison would be opened but to the gates of the fire of Hell. Although this prison is full of fire which mounts right to the hearts, but there is a veil between such men and perception of its pain; and once this veil is removed by death, its pain soon becomes perceptible.

In reference to that, Allah Almighty revealed the truth on the tongue of some

people who said: "Both Paradise and Hell are created. But Hell is once perceived by a perception called ' certainty of mind', and once by a perception called ' certainty of sight'." But the certainty of sight would happen only in the hereafter. The certainty of mind might be in this world but for those who have fulfilled their fortune of the light of certainty. For this reason, Allah Almighty says: " Nay, were you to know with certainty of mind, (you would beware!) You shall certainly see Hell-fire!" i.e. in the world "Again, you shall see it with certainty of sight!" i.e. in the hereafter. (At-Takathur 5-7)

﴿ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ ٱلْيَقِينِ ۝٥ لَتَرَوُنَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ ۝٦ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ ٱلْيَقِينِ ۝٧ ﴾

Thus it is clear that the heart to be fitting for the dominion of the hereafter is very rare, like the person to be fitting for the kingdom of this world.

A sixth division: It combines all kinds of favor. It should be known to you that a favor might be sought as being an end in itself, or as being a means to achieve another end. What is an end in itself is the permanent happiness of the hereafter. It has four characteristics: never-ending permanence; pleasure in which there is no grief; knowledge with which there is no ignorance; and richness after which there is no poverty. That is the real favor about which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There is no real living but that of the hereafter." He said so during the time of hardship to console himself and the people, i.e. during digging the trench. (both sheikhs on the authority of Anas). But he said the same once again at the time of prosperity, to forbid the soul to rely on the pleasure of this world, i.e. when the people surrounded him during the farewell Hajj. (Ash-Shafi'i and Al-Hakim). A man said (by way of supplication): "O Allah! I ask you the perfection of favor." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" asked him: "Do you know the perfection of favor?" the man answered in the negative, thereupon he said: "The perfection of favor is to enter Paradise." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Mu'adh).

As for the means, they are divided into the nearest, like the merits of the self, and then the next of nearness like the merits of body, and then the next which transcends the body to other things, like means and ways attached to the body such as property, family and clan, and those which combines the means outside and inside the self, like guidance and success. Those then are four categories:

The first pertains to the spiritual merits, which return in the end to faith and good manners. Faith is divided into the science of disclosure (Mukashafah), i.e. the gnosis of Allah Almighty, His attributes and acts, His angels, Messengers and Books; and the sciences of practical religion (Mu'amalah). As for the good manners, they are also divided into two: the abandonment of desires and anger, and this is called chastity. One should observe justice in refraining from and fulfillment of desires, in a way that makes him follow a middle course between absolute abstention and absolute fulfillment. Thus his abstention and fulfillment become subject to the just balance revealed by Allah Almighty on the tongue of His Messenger "peace be upon him", as shown from His statement: " In order that you may not transgress (due) balance. So establish weight with justice and fall

not short in the balance." (Ar-Rahman 8-9)

﴿ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ﴿٨﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

So, whoever gets himself castrated in order to abstain from the sexual desire, or abandons marriage given his financial and physical capability, or whoever refrains from eating until he weakens even to practice his acts of worship, has, indeed, fallen short in the balance. Similarly, whoever is involved in fulfillment of the desires of belly and sex has indeed transgressed the due balance. Justice requires to make his balance due, neither transgressing nor falling short; and it is only with this that both scales of balance become just. The merits of the self which draw one near to Allah are then four: the science of Disclosure, the science of practical religion, chastity and justice.

But more often, this is not achieved without the second category, i.e. the physical merits, and they are four: health, power, beauty and long life. But those four could hardly be made easy without the third category, i.e. the favors that are external but surrounding the body, and they are also four: property, family, majesty and clan. But neither the physical merits nor the outside merits could avail without the fourth category, i.e. that which matches them and what befits them of the spiritual merits, and they are four: Allah's guidance, direction, success and support.

Those then are sixteen favors divided into four categories, and each consisting of four. They always need each other, and that need might be essential or beneficial. An example of the essential need is the need of the hereafter happiness for faith and good manners. There is no way to have access to the hereafter happiness without both. None has more than the fruits of his endeavor, as well as none shall have of the hereafter but the provisions he takes from this world. Similarly, the need of the self-favors which helps man acquire those sciences and improve manners for such physical favors as health is essential. An example of the beneficial need is the need of the self-favors and the physical favors for such outside favors as wealth, honor and family. If those are absent, perhaps it might lead to disorder in some inside favors.

You may ask: "What is the need of the way to the hereafter for the external favors like wealth, family majesty and clan?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that those external favors are like the wing or the instrument which facilitates the achievement of the purpose. As for wealth, the poor who seeks to obtain knowledge and perfection, without having sufficient money to help him do so is like him who goes to the war without a missile, or like a falcon which chases without a wing. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "How good wealth is that for the good man!" (Ahmad, Abu Ya'li and At-Tabarani on the authority of Amr Ibn Al-As). the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "What a good wealth is to assist one fear Allah (and safeguard himself from His punishment)!" (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Jabir).

Why not since he who is deprived of wealth consumes the most part of his time in gaining sustenance, and securing clothes and residence, in addition to the other necessities of living? Furthermore, he is exposed to such of harmful things

as divert him from celebration (of Allah) and meditation (of His signs), which could hardly be averted without the missile of wealth. Additionally, the shortage of wealth deprives one of performing Hajj, giving in charity, and spending in what is good. One of the sages was asked about the blessing, thereupon he said: "Richness. Indeed, I have seen that the poor could not have a real living." He was asked to give more thereupon he said: "Security. Indeed, I have seen that the fearful could not have a real living." He was asked to give more and he said: "Health. Indeed, I have seen that the weak and sick could have no real living." He was asked to give more and he said: "Youth. Indeed, I have seen that the old aged could have no real living." What he referred to belongs to the blessing of the world, but inasmuch as it helps one for the hereafter, it is a favor. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, upon whom morning comes and he is health, secure in himself, and has the sustenance of his day, seems as if the entire world has been owned by him." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Ubaidullah Ibn Mihsan Al-Ansari).

As for the family and good offspring, the need for them is not hidden. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "How good person is the righteous wife to help (her husband) in religion." Concerning the offspring, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If mankind dies, his deed would cease except in regard with three things: ...and a good son/daughter to invoke good upon him." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah). We have made a mention of the merits of the wife and children in the Book of Marriage.

As for kinship, the more a man has children and relatives, the more they become like his eyes and hands to facilitate for him a lot of things in the world which help him in his religion, and were he to be alone, he would spend long time to facilitate them. All what disengages your heart from the worldly necessities helps you in the religion, and becomes a favor for you.

As for honor and majesty, with them man averts humiliation and injustice from himself. Almost no Muslim could dispense with any of both, for he is surrounded from all sides by an enemy to harm him, and a wrongdoer to distract his knowledge, work and free time, and engage his heart, which is his main capital. But by honor and majesty, those occupants are averted. For this reason, it is said: "Religion and power of authority are twins." In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " And did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief: but Allah is full of bounty to all the worlds." (Al-Baqarah 251)

﴿ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَّفَسَدَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٥١﴾ ﴾

There is no meaning for majesty but to have possession of hearts, as well as there is no meaning for richness but to have possession of Dirhams and Dinars, and by virtue of possessing money, masters of hearts are subjugated to defend him. As well as one needs a roof to protect him against rain, a cloak to protect him against cold, a dog to protect his cattle and sheep against the wolf, one also needs somebody therewith to avert evil from himself.

It is with that purpose that the Prophets "peace be upon them" who had no

power of authority sought the support of those endued with authority among the people, and so do the religious scholars, not with the intention to get from their treasures, and increase their number in this world by following them. Think not that the favor of Allah Almighty on the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" as He supported him, perfected for him his religion, made him victorious over all his enemies, and planted his love in the hearts of people, until his honor and majesty became far-reaching, was less than His favor on him "peace be upon him" when he was exposed to harm until he was forced to emigrate.

You may ask: "Are the honor of the clan and the good ancestry of the family among the favors?" I answer in the affirmative. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The imams (rulers) should be from Quraish." (An-Nasa'i and Al-Hakim on the authority of Anas). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was the most honored in ancestry among all sons of Adam "peace be upon him". The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Select for your (children to be produced from your) sperm-drops the equivalent (to you in religion)." (Ibn Majah on the authority of A'ishah). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Beware of the green plant that grows amidst the dunghill." They asked: "What is the green plant which grows amidst the dunghill O Messenger of Allah?" He "peace be upon him" said: "The pretty woman who grows up in a bad family." That is also one of the favors. But I do not mean by it the belonging to the wrongdoers, or the lovers and masters of this world, but I mean the belonging to the family tree of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" as well as to the righteous religious scholars and pious men whose work and knowledge are good.

You may ask: "What is intended by the physical merits?" Let me say that it is not hidden that there is a dire need for health, power and long life, without which both knowledge and work could hardly be obtained. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The best of happiness is the long life to be spent in obedience of Allah Almighty." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Bakrah, but with variation in wording). But only the fourth among them, i.e. the beauty is regarded with slightness. It is said that suffices for one to have his body sound and flawless of the ailments which divert one from doing good.

By my life, beauty, though of little benefit, is one of the good things. Its benefit in this world is self-evident. As for the hereafter, its benefit is due to two points of view:

The first is that the ugly is dispraised and loathsome, whereas the beautiful is nearer to the hearts, and his needs are closer to be responded to by others. From this perspective, it is a wing, like wealth and majesty, that conveys to the purpose. That is because it is a kind of power therewith the good-looking person could achieve things that is beyond the power of the bad-looking. To be sure, what helps one achieve the needs of this world is considered useful in accomplishing the hereafter needs.

The other point is that beauty, more often, indicates to the merit of the soul,

for the light of the soul, once it rises perfectly, is reflected on the face. Both appearance and essence are frequently inherent. For this reason, the physiognomists often rely on the physical appearance as indicator to the good manners. They say: "Both face and eye are a mirror of the inner self." The traces of anger, grief and pleasure always appear on the face. It is also said: "The cheerfulness of the face is the title of what is lurking in the self." It is further said: "Nothing ugly exists in the earth but that its face is the prettiest of it." Once, Al-Ma'mun spectated the army and behold! An ugly man was shown to him and when he asked him about himself, he found out that he was mute, thereupon he cancelled his military enrollment. In his justification of that he said: "When the soul rises with its light on the appearance, it makes it bright, and if it does in the soul, it seems in the form of eloquence; and this man has neither a good appearance, nor a good soul."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Seek good with those of bright faces." (Ibn Hibban and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Umar). Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "If you send a messenger, seek a person of lovely face and good name." according to many religious jurisprudents: "If the praying men are equal in rank, then, the most good-looking among them are preferable to lead the prayer." In confirmation of the importance of beauty, Allah Almighty said (about Talut): "Allah has chosen him above you, and has gifted him abundantly with knowledge and bodily prowess: Allah grants His authority to whom He pleases." (Al-Baqarah 247)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُۥ بَسْطَةً فِى ٱلْعِلْمِ وَٱلْجِسْمِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يُؤْتِى مُلْكَهُۥ مَن يَشَآءُ ﴾

Of course we do not mean by beauty what arouses sexual desire, for this belongs to femininity. But we mean the high straight stature with moderation of flesh and proportion of organs and facial features so that people would not detest looking at him.

But you may argue: "You have included wealth, good ancestry, majesty, family and offspring among the favors, although wealth and majesty in particular are dispraised by Allah Almighty, as well as by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and the religious scholars. Allah Almighty said in this respect: " O you who believe! Truly, among your wives and your children are (some that are) enemies to yourselves: so beware of them!" (At-Taghabun 14)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَّكُمْ فَٱحْذَرُوهُمْ ﴾

And: "And know you that your possessions and your progeny are but a trial; and that it is Allah with whom lies your highest reward." (Al-Anfal 28)

﴿ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَآ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said in dispraising the ancestry: "No doubt, the people are the sons of (their work)that they do well, and the value of every man is (determined by the work) that he does well." It is said: "The man is (valuable) by himself and not by virtue of his father." Then, how should those be considered favors given that they are dispraised under Sharia?"

In reply to that, it should be known to you that whoever depends in obtaining sciences only on the transmitted words that are interpreted (according to inclinations) and the generalizations which he particularizes should inevitably go astray, as long as he is not guided by the light of Allah Almighty to perceive sciences as they are in reality, and then construe the transmitted texts according to what seems to him from them, once by interpretation and once by particularization. Those favors help one accomplish the affairs of the hereafter, and there is no way to deny that. But at the same time, they might be a source of temptations and risks. The example of the wealth is like a female-snake which has harmful poison and beneficial medicine. If it is taken by the snake charmer who knows well how to avoid its harmful poison and the way to extract its beneficial medicine, it will be a favor for him, and if the heedless gets it, it will be a disfavor on him. It is also like the sea that is full of variety of gems and pearls underneath its water. If the one who sails in the sea is skilled in swimming, diving and avoiding its destructives, he will be able to attain its favors and pleasures. But if the one who plunges into it is an ignorant and heedless of that, he will be destroyed.

This is why Allah Almighty praised wealth and named it 'good', and the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" praised it when he said: "What a good wealth is to aid one to fear Allah Almighty (and safeguard himself from His punishment)!" similarly, Allah Almighty praised majesty and honor when He conferred His favor upon His Messenger "peace be upon him" and made his religion prevail over all religions, and endeared him to the people, and made him loveable to their hearts. All this was by virtue of majesty. But the texts transmitted in praising it are little in comparison with those transmitted in dispraising majesty and wealth.

Furthermore, wherever showing off is dispraised, majesty is dispraised with it, for the purpose of showing off is to attract the hearts, and the significance of majesty is to have possession of hearts. Both majesty and wealth are dispraised more often and praised less for the majority of people are ignorant of the way to deal with the female-snake of wealth and dive in the ocean of majesty. So, it has become incumbent to warn them, for they would be ruined by the poison of wealth before being able to extract its medicine, and would be eaten by the crocodile of the sea of majesty before obtaining its pearls and gems. Had they been dispraised in all states and for all the people, kingship then would not have been ascribed to Prophethood, as it was to our Messenger "peace be upon him", nor would richness been ascribed to it as was ascribed to Solomon "peace be upon him".

However, all the people in this world are but children, and wealth is like female-snakes, and Prophets and Gnostics are female-snake charmers. Thus what harms the child might not harm the snake charmer. Ti is true that if the snake charmer has a child whom he likes to save, and he finds a female-snake, and takes it with the intention to get its medicine, and there is fear that his child, seeing him and desirous to imitate him, might play with a similar female-snake once he finds it, in which case, it becomes incumbent upon the snake

charmer to make a comparison between his purpose of getting the medicine and his purpose of saving the life of his child: if he could dispense with the medicine with no harm, and at the same time his child might probably take the female-snake to play with it, which exposes him to destruction, then, it would be binding upon him to run away from it, and ask the child to do so, and deface it in his sight, and show to him that it has fatal poison, from which none could be saved, and abstain from telling him anything about its beneficial medicine, for this might harm him if he does it without sufficient knowledge. Similarly, if a diver knows that his child, who is not skilled in diving, might probably follow him and expose himself to destruction in case he dives, which it becomes incumbent upon him to refrain from diving and further warn his child of the risk of the sea and river. If the child is not deterred by only warning, seeing his father hover round the seacoast, it becomes binding upon his father to move far from the seacoast, and come not close to him at the sight of his child.

Likewise, the people in comparison with the Prophets are like stupid children. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, I am to you like the parent in relation to his child." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "You would fall into the fire (of Hell on the Day of Judgement), like moths and I would keep you away (as much as I could)." (both sheikhs on the authority of Abu Hurairah). Their greatest portion is to keep their children from destructives, for which only they were sent as Prophets. But their portion in wealth was only in proportion to sustain themselves. For this reason, they limited themselves to the amount of sustenance, and did not withhold, but rather spent what remained beyond their essential needs.

However, medicine lies in spending, whereas poison lies in withholding. If the gate of earning is opened to the people and they are exhorted to do so, they would surely be inclined to the poison of withholding, and turn from the medicine of spending. This is why wealth was defaced, in reference to the fact that what should be defaced is to withhold it, and be stingy on it, by proliferating it and increasing its delight in a way that causes one to rely on the world with its pleasures. But to take from it only what suffices to sustain oneself and spend what is beyond the need in good things is not blameworthy.

It is incumbent upon every traveler but to carry only such of provision as suffices him on journey, if he is determined to sustain only himself. But if he is pleased to have his journey companions share food with him, there will be no harm to increase his provision. It is within that meaning that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Let the vehicle of conveyance of anyone of you (to the hereafter) from this world is no more than the rider's provision." (Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim on the authority of Salman). This is in case he spends only on himself, otherwise, some narrators of this Hadith used to take as much as one hundred Dirhams and spend it all at once on the needy and keep no single one thereof with them. When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" told that the wealthy would, by a

hair's breadth, enter Paradise, Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf "Allah be pleased with him" sought his permission to abandon his wealth entirely, and he gave him permission. But Gabriel "peace be upon him" descended and said to him: "Tell him to feed the indigent, dress the naked, and deal with the guest generously." (Al-Hakim on the authority of Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf).

The worldly favors then are not entirely pure, for their medicine is contaminated with poison, good expectations with risks, and benefit with harm. So, whoever is confident of his good insight and gnosis, he could approach the world if he so likes, provided that he should ward off its poison and extract its medicine carefully; and whoever is not confident of that, let him run away in flight from its probable risks. Indeed, safety is unequalled for such, who represent almost all the people save such of them as Allah Almighty protected and guided to the right path.

You may ask: "What is the concept of the accommodational favors to which Allah accommodates the servant by virtue of guidance, rectitude of conduct, support and grant of success?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that the Divine accommodation is indispensable. It is to accommodate the will of a servant to coincide with the Divine decree and fate of Allah Almighty. It includes both good and evil, and both happiness and wretchedness. But the custom requires to specify the term 'Divine accommodation' to the fate and Divine decrees of Allah Almighty which coincide with happiness only. Similarly, as atheism is to deviate, it is specified to him who inclines from the truth to falsehood. The need of Divine accommodation is then self-evident. For this reason it is said: "If a man is not helped by Allah Almighty (do good), his effort more often leads him to evil consequences."

As for guidance, there is no way for a servant to seek happiness without it. That is because the will of man might incline to what serves for his benefit in the hereafter. But if he fails to know what benefits him in the hereafter, thinking corruption to be benefit, then, which profit could his will only avail him? Indeed, there is no benefit in the will, power and causes except after the guidance (of Allah). That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature, and further, gave (it) guidance." (Ta Ha 50)

﴿قَالَ رَبُّنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلْقَهُۥ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ ﴿٥٠﴾﴾

And: " and were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, not one of you would ever have been pure: but Allah does purify whom He pleases: and Allah is One Who hears and knows (all things)." (An-Nur 21)

﴿وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ مَا زَكَىٰ مِنكُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا

وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُزَكِّى مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "None shall enter Paradise without the mercy, i.e. guidance of Allah Almighty." It was said to him: "And even not you O Messenger of Allah?" he said: "And not even I." (both sheikhs on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Guidance has three stations: the first is to know the way to good and evil referred to by the statement of Allah Almighty: " And shown him the two highways?" (Al-Balad 10)

﴿ وَهَدَيْنَـٰهُ ٱلنَّجْدَيْنِ ﴾

Allah Almighty conferred that favor upon all of His servants, some by virtue of mind, and others on the tongue of His Messengers "peace be upon them". That is the meaning of His statement: " As to the Thamud, We gave them guidance, but they preferred blindness (of heart) to Guidance: so the stunning Punishment of humiliation seized them, because of what they had earned." (Fussilat 17)

﴿ وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَـٰهُمْ فَٱسْتَحَبُّوا۟ ٱلْعَمَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ فَأَخَذَتْهُمْ صَـٰعِقَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴾

The causes of guidance then are the Books, the Messengers, and the sights of mind. All of those are available, and nothing hinders from them other than envy, arrogance and love for this world, in addition to the causes that blind the hearts but not the sights, as confirmed by Allah Almighty in His statement: " Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts which are in their breasts." (Al-Hajj 46)

﴿ فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى ٱلْأَبْصَـٰرُ وَلَـٰكِن تَعْمَى ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلَّتِى فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴾

Among the causes that blind the insights, a mention may be made of the long habit and tradition as referred to by Allah Almighty in His statement: "Nay! they say: "We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we do guide ourselves by their footsteps."" (Az-Zukhruf 22)

﴿ بَلْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَـٰرِهِم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴾

To arrogance and envy as among the causes of blindness, Allah refers in His statement: "Also, they say: "Why is not this Qur'an sent down to some leading man in either of the two (chief) cities?"" (Az-Zukhruf 31)

﴿ وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَـٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنَ ٱلْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴾

And: "For they said: "What! a man! a solitary one from among ourselves! shall we follow such a one? Truly should we then be straying in mind, and mad!" (Al-Qamar 24)

﴿ فَقَالُوٓا۟ أَبَشَرًا مِّنَّا وَٰحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهُۥٓ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّفِى ضَلَـٰلٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴾

It is those causes of blindness that hindered people from receiving guidance.

The second guidance is that which follows the first one, with which Allah Almighty provides the servant from time to time as a fruit of self-mortification, as confirmed by His statement: " And those who strive in Our (Cause), We will certainly guide them to Our Paths: for verily Allah is with those who do right." (Al-Ankabut 69)

﴿ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

And: "But to those who receive guidance, He increases the (light of) Guidance, and bestows on them their Piety and Restraint (from evil)." (Muhammad 17)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱهْتَدَوْا۟ زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَءَاتَىٰهُمْ تَقْوَىٰهُمْ ﴾

The third guidance which follows the second one is the light that rises in the world of Prophethood and alliance (of Allah Almighty) after the perfection of self-mortification, with which one receives guidance more than he would do by virtue of the normal mind with which obligation and learning sciences are due. It is that which Allah Almighty honored when He ascribed it to himself, given that all things comes from Allah Almighty, as shown in His statement: "Say: "Allah's guidance is the (only) guidance, and we have been directed to submit ourselves to the Lord of the Worlds." (Al-An'am 71)

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ ۖ وَأُمِرْنَا لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴾

It is called life in the statement of Allah Almighty: " Can he who was dead, to whom We gave life, and a Light whereby he can walk amongst men, be like him who is in the depths of darkness, from which he can never come out? Thus to those without Faith their own deeds seem pleasing." (Al-An'am 122)

﴿ أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ نُورًا يَمْشِى بِهِۦ فِى ٱلنَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُۥ فِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

It is intended by the statement of Allah: "Is one whose heart Allah has opened to Islam, so that he has received enlightenment from Allah, (no better than one hard-hearted)?" (Az-Zumar 22)

﴿ أَفَمَن شَرَحَ ٱللَّهُ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَٰسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم ﴾

By rectitude of conduct, we mean the Divine care that helps man achieve his purposes, and strengthens him to do what benefits him and refrain from what harms him. It always comes from within as stated by Allah Almighty in His saying: "We bestowed aforetime on Abraham his rectitude of conduct, and well were We acquainted with him." (Al-Anbiya 51)

﴿ ۞ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ رُشْدَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِهِۦ عَٰلِمِينَ ﴾

The rectitude of conduct is guidance which moves one to the direction of happiness. If a young man, for instance, becomes well-experienced in storing wealth and the different ways of trade which increases wealth, but, at the same time, he spends with profligacy, he will not be called rightly-directed, not because of his lacking guidance but because of the failure of his guidance to provoke his will to increase wealth. How many a man who does what he knows to harm him, although he is given guidance with which he is distinguished from the ignorant who does not know that this harms him, but he is not given rectitude of conduct. By that consideration, rectitude of conduct is more perfect than the mere guidance to the ways of good. To be sure, it is a great favor.

As for grant of success, it is to direct one straight to the right purpose, and make it easy on him in order to endeavor more to do the right as fast as he could.

However, the mere guidance alone is insufficient, but it should be a guidance that has the power to move the will, i.e. the rectitude of conduct. Rectitude of conduct alone is insufficient, but the movements should be made easy with the help of organs and instruments for the goal for which the will is stimulated to be achieved. Thus, guidance is to let one know, rectitude of conduct is to stimulate the will to wake up and move, and the grant of success is to assist and help by moving the organs towards success.

Support combines all of those. It is to strengthen one by insight from within, and strengthen his doing and empower causes from without. It is intended by the statement of Allah Almighty: " We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, Clear (Signs) and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit." (Al-Baqarah 87)

﴿ وَءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَيَّدْنَٰهُ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ ﴾

Close to that is protection. It is a kind of Divine existence swimming within man, therewith he is strengthened to do good and refrain from evil. It is invisible, to which Allah refers in His statement: " And (with passion) did she desire him, and he would have desired her, but that he saw the evidence of his Lord: thus (did We order) that We might turn away from him (all) evil and shameful deeds." (Yusuf 24)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِۦ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَآ أَن رَّءَا بُرْهَٰنَ رَبِّهِۦ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَٱلْفَحْشَآءَ ﴾

Those are the main favors which could not stand firm in the absence of the pure and sharp understanding, aware hearing, insightful and humble heart, advice-giving tutor, wealth that is sufficient for one to do his required tasks, which, if short, would make him indulge in that, and if beyond the needs, would not divert him from the religious affairs, and honor that protects him from the foolishness of the foolish, and the wrongness of the enemies. Each one of those sixteen favors requires many causes, and each one of those causes requires many further causes, and so forth until it leads in the end to the guide of the wanderers and the refuge of the needy, i.e. the Lord of all lords, and the Causer of all causes.

Given that the chain of those causes is endless, and too countless to enumerate in that book, let's mention an example for them in order to know therewith the significance of Allah Almighty: " But if you count the favours of Allah, never will you be able to number them. Verily, man is given up to injustice and ingratitude." (Ibrahim 34)

﴿ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴾

Explication Of An Example That Is Typical Of The Fact That The Favors Of Allah Almighty Are Countless

It should be known to you that we have included the favors of Allah Almighty under sixteen elements, and made the favor of body health one of them in the last category. If we like to survey all causes and means that lead to it, of a surety, we could not be able to do so. But eating, for instance, is one of the

causes of health. Let us make a mention of a set of causes with which the favor of eating is achieved.

Eating is an act, and its being an act means that it is a movement, and every movement should have a moving body which is its instrument, and a power to move, a will to cause it to move, and knowledge and perception of the desired purpose of movement. Eating requires an eaten, i.e. an edible thing, and this requires an origin from which it is produced, and a maker to prepare it. Let's now mention the causes of perception, then the causes of will, then the causes of power, and then the causes of the edible thing, all by way of reference and not by way of survey.

The First Side Of Allah's Favors: The Creation Of The Causes Of Perception

It should be known to you that Allah Almighty created the plant as more perfect in existence than stone, iron, copper, and all lifeless non-living beings which never grow nor are given nutrition. The plant is endowed with a power to attract nutrition to it, through its root and trunk that extend in the earth, working thereby as instruments for it. They begin from the fine and minute strands on the leaf whose roots are gradually thick and then they ramify into capillaries spreading throughout the parts of the leaf until they disappear from the sight. But in spite of that, the plant is imperfect, for unless the nutrition is driven to it and be in contact with its root, it would wither and die. By no means could it seek for nutrition in any way other than that, for the petition is based on the knowledge of what is petitioned and then movement to it. But the plant is unable to do so.

Thus, among the favors of Allah Almighty He bestowed upon you is that He created for you the instruments of sense and movement therewith to seek for nutrition. Consider, for example, the wisdom that lies behind the order in which Allah Almighty created in you the five senses, i.e. the instruments of perception. The first is the sense of touching in order that whenever a burning fire or a wounding sword touches you, you would soon flee away. That is the first sense to be created for animals, and no animal is imagined without it. Without that sense, by no means would it be possible for it to live as an animal. The least degree of sense is to sense only what touches it for to sense what is far from the body is more perfect. That sense is available to every animal, including even such small and little ones as the worm in the mud: if it is pierced with a thorn, it would soon shrink to run away, unlike the plant which, even if cut off, would not shrink for it does not feel the pain of cutting.

But if you have only that sense, you would be imperfect, unable to seek for nutrition, like the worm, as long as it is far from you, for you would not sense but what touches your skin, which you thus would attract to yourself. That is because you would lack a sense to perceive therewith what is far from the contact of your skin. For this reason, the sense of smelling has been created for you. But with it, you detect only the smell, without knowing from which direction it comes upon you. You then need to go round different sides perhaps you would or would not find the food whose smell you have detected. Were you to have only those senses, you would be evidently imperfect. Thus, the sense of seeing has been

created for you to perceive therewith what is far from you and identify its exact direction, in order to go towards it.

But were you to have only those, you would also remain imperfect, for you would be unable to perceive what is beyond the walls and screens. You would see only that between you and which there is no screen, be it food, enemy, etc, but not that between you and which there is a screen. Such screen might not be removed before the enemy comes close to you and you thus are unable to run away. Thus, the sense of hearing has been created for you to perceive therewith the sounds from behind the walls and screens. That is because you perceive with the sight only what is present in front of you and you could not perceive what is absent from you except with the help of sounds and words to be recognized by the sense of hearing. That is the significance of your dire need for it. You also have been distinguished from all animals by the capability of understanding speech. But even, all of this would avail you not unless the sense of taste has been created for you, for once the food reaches you, without it you would not be able to perceive whether or not it agrees with your disposition; and in case it disagrees with you and you eat it, you would be ruined, like the tree which is apt to receive every kind of liquid, without tasting it, although it might cause it to wither.

But even, all of this is insufficient unless something has been created in front of your brain called the common sense, to which all perceptibles to be perceived through the five senses are brought together. If you eat something yellow which you detest as being bitter, and then leave it, you will not recognize it if you find it without tasting it once again in the absence of that common sense. The eye sees the yellowness but perceives not the bitterness, whereas the taste tastes the bitterness but perceives not the yellowness, how should both then abstain from getting the harmful thing once again? So, there should be a judge with whom both yellowness and bitterness meet, in order to judge, depending on both, that this particular thing is harmful from which you should abstain.

In all of those senses, the animals share you; and were you to have only those, you would remain still imperfect. Any animal might be taken by a trick, and does not know how to avert harm from itself, and get rid of the trick. If it is tied, how should it release itself? It might throw itself into a well, knowing not that this might destroy it. It might eat what tastes pleasant immediately but is harmful in the future, with the result that it falls ill and dies. That is because it senses only what is occurring at the moment, and not the consequences in the future. That is the favor with which Allah has distinguished you.

Consider then how Allah Almighty favored and honoured you over all things by that favor, which is the noblest of all, i.e. the mind. It is with mind that you perceive the harm and benefit of the food at present and in the future, the way of cooking and preparing different kinds of food in order to taste pleasant and become beneficial. In this way, you get benefit from the mind in the food which is among the important causes of your health. That is the best benefit of mind, and the smallest wisdom, for the greatest wisdom that lies behind the creation of mind is the gnosis of Allah Almighty and His acts and attributes. At that point

the benefit of the five senses turns in your favour, as they would become like spies entrusted to collect news from different sides of the kingdom, each to a specific field: one to the news of colours, another to the news of sounds, a third to the news of scents, a fourth to the news of tastes, and a fifth to the news of the cold and heat, coarseness and softness, dryness and fluidity, etc. the spies then collect news from the different sides of the kingdom and give them to the common sense, which lies in the front of the brain, like the man standing at the door of the king to gather stories and books that come to him from all parts of the world. He takes and preserves them as sealed and closed, for his duty is only to take and preserve them but not to know what they contain. Once he meets the king, i.e. the mind, he hands them over to him, who, in turn, inspects them, and gets acquainted with the secrets and mysteries of the kingdom and judge with their help on the different cases in the kingdom. It is according to what seems to him therefrom that he moves the soldiers and members of the kingdom, once in pursuit of something, once in flight from something, and so on.

That is the sequence of the favors of Allah on you concerning the perceptions. Think not that we have mentioned them in full. The outward senses are a part of perceptions, and sight is one of them, and one of its instruments is the eye, which is composed of ten layers over each other, and each has its specific characteristics and attributes, form and appearance. If there is disorder in anyone of those ten, the sight would be affected, and it would become beyond the capability of physicians to recover. This is in relation to one sense, on the basis of which you should measure all senses like hearing, touching, tasting and smelling. The favors of Allah Almighty in one sense, or to be more specific, in one part of a sense, could not be mentioned in full in many volumes, although it might be as small as an eyeball. How then do you think of all members and parts of the body?

Those are only exemplary references to the favors of Allah Almighty as regards the creation of perceptions.

The Second Side Of Allah's Favors As Regards The Creation Of Will

It should be known to you that even if the sight is created for you to perceive therewith the food from afar, but at the same time, no inclination nor longing nor appetite are created for you to urge you to move to get it, such sight would remain idle. How many a patient who sees with his eye the food which is beneficial to him, but in the absence of appetite for it, he abstains from getting it, with the result that both sight and perception become idle. Thus, you are forced to have inclination to what pleases you, called appetite, and disinclination from what displeases you, called aversion, in order that you then would pursue a thing with the help of appetite and flee away from another with the help of aversion. Thus, Allah Almighty created in you the appetite for food, and invested it with authority over you, and entrusted you to it, in order to force you to get food, and by eating you would survive. All animals, but not the plants share you in that favor.

Furthermore, unless that appetite calms down once it takes what is sufficient for it, it would cause you to eat lavishly until you destroy yourself. For this reason, Allah Almighty created for you the aversion which appears at satiety

therewith to abstain from getting more. In this way, you are unlike the plant which continues to attract water to it as much as it is available until it is spoiled. This requires it to be in need for a man to determine the provision for it, i.e. to water it once and withhold water from it once, and so on. As well as this appetite for food has been created for you to eat and sustain your body, the sexual desire has been created for you to have sexual intercourse (with such as lawful for you) and sustain your human race.

If we relate to you the wonders of the making of Allah in creation of the womb, blood of menstruation, the formation of the fetus from the mixture of the sperm and the female discharge, the creation of the testicles and the veins that connect them with the backbone which is the source of seamen, the way the female discharge flows from between the ribs through the related veins, the way the womb is divided into places to determine the kind of male and female once the sperm falls in a particular one, the way the fetus turns through different phases of creation beginning from being a sperm-drop, then a leech-like clot of congealed blood, then a morsel of flesh, then a piece of flesh covered with bone and filled with blood, and the way it is divided to form the body with its different parts like the head, hands, legs, belly, back, etc: if we relate all of those to you, surely, you would be extremely amazed by those favors bestowed by Allah upon you just in the matter of your creation in its first phases. But we want to limit ourselves to the favors of Allah Almighty in the matter of eating, in order not to be so much lengthy.

The appetite for food is one of the elements of will. But it alone is not sufficient for you, for you are surrounded by the destructives from all sides, and unless the power of anger is created in you, you would fail to avert harm from yourself, and rather be exposed to all kinds of evil which might deprive you of all provision you have got. Everyone other than you desires for what is in your hand, and you need a drive to avert and fight that, i.e. the drive of anger, therewith you avert all that harms you. But even both alone are insufficient for you, for they call only to what benefits and harms at the moment. But as regards the future, they are useless. Here, Allah Almighty created another will for you, to be subjugated to the command of mind which knows the future consequences, just as He created both anger and desire to be subjugated under the sensible perception of the present state. That is the way you benefit from the mind. Your knowledge alone that this desire harms you would not avail you to avoid it unless you have inclination to act in accordance with that knowledge. It is with this will that you have been preferred to the animals out of honoring mankind, just as you have been favored with the knowledge of the future consequences. We called that will a religious motive, and explained it in more detail in the Book of Patience.

The Third Side Of Allah's Favors Of Creating Well And Instruments Of Movement

It should be known to you that sense avails not but the perception, and the will has no value without inclination to pursuit or flight. This alone is insufficient if you lack the instrument of pursuit and flight. How many a patient who has longing for something afar from him which he perceives well, but he could not

move towards it for he loses his leg, or could not grasp it for he loses his hand, or because he is paralyzed. For this reason, the instruments of movement should be available and they should be provided with power to enable them to move in pursuit according to desire, or in flight according to aversion. For this reason, Allah Almighty created for you the organs and parts of body which you see their outward, but do not know well their inward mysteries. Some of them are made to pursuit and flight such as legs for man, wings for bird and sides for animals, and some to avert harm like the weapons for man and horns for animals. In this respect, animals are extremely different. Some have their enemies more and provision far, thereupon they need quick movement, for which wings were created for them therewith to fly fast. Some have four sides and some two legs created for them, and others are creeping. But it will be too long to mention them all

Let's limit our mention to the organs that are necessary for eating and measure all on them. It is insufficient to see the food from afar unless you are able to get it. In this way, you lack a grasping instrument, thereupon Allah Almighty bestowed on you the favor of both hands. They are too long to stretch towards things and have joints to enable them move easily in various directions. The hand's end is made broad by creating the palm, which is divided from the end into five parts representing the five fingers, that are made in two sides: the thumb in one side, and the remaining four in the other side. Were all to be gathered or accumulated in one side, the purpose from the hand would not be fully achieved. They are made in a way that if you spread the hand, it will become a sweeper, and if you withdraw it to you, it will become a spade, and if you gather it, it will turn into a striking instrument, and if you spread and then draw it, it will become a grasping tool. Then, nails were created for it, and made to be over the ends of fingers in order not to go to pieces, so that therewith you could pick up the fine things which could not be picked by fingers.

Then, suppose you are able to pick up food with your hands, how should it be sufficient for you unless it reaches the stomach which is inside your belly? That requires a path through which food could enter into it. Thus mouth was made an outlet to the stomach, besides its great number of benefits and advantages. But even, if you insert the food into the mouth and it is one piece, it will not be easy to swallow unless it is ground. This necessitates you to need a grinding teeth therewith to grind food. Thus, tooth-bearing bones were created for you, and the upper molars were made to close on the lower ones in order to be able therewith to grind food.

Food sometimes needs to be crushed, and sometimes to be cut off, after which it needs to be ground. This is why teeth were divided into broad molars, sharp cutters like canine teeth, and pointed teeth like incisors. The joints of both jaws were made limply movable so that the lower jaw would move forward and back of the upper one. Without that, both would strike each other like the clapping of hands, and food would not be ground well. But the lower jaw was made movable, and the upper firm. Consider then the wonderful making of Allah Almighty. Every kind of human-made millstone has its lower stone firm and its

upper stone movable, in contradiction to that Divine-made millstone. Glory be to Allah! How great is His state, how powerful is His authority, how perfect is His proof, and how extensive is His favor.

Then, suppose that you inserted the food into the cavity of the mouth, how do you imagine it to move in between the teeth? How should teeth draw it to themselves? In this issue, consider how Allah Almighty bestowed upon you the favor of the tongue which moves in the different sides of the mouth wherever it likes, pulling food towards teeth in accordance with the required need, like the sweeper which pulls grains inside the millstone. It also has many other benefits like taste, the wonders of the faculty of speech, and many besides which we are not going to mention now.

Suppose that you cut and ground the food which is dry, you would not be able to swallow it unless it skates into the pharynx with the help of moisture. In this respect, consider how Allah Almighty created underneath the tongue a channel therefrom saliva flows as much as is required with which the food is kneaded. Consider how He Almighty subjugated it to serve in this matter: you see food from afar, thereupon the jawbones are stimulated to serve in chewing, and the saliva flows to help in this process, while food still is far from you.

Then, suppose that the food is really ground inside the mouth with the help of teeth and molars, and kneaded with the saliva, how should it reach the stomach? By no means you could be able to stretch your hand into the mouth to drive it in towards the stomach, nor does the stomach have something to pull it towards itself. Thus, consider how Allah Almighty prepared the esophagus to expand and open for the food to enter, and once it enters, it soon contracts so that with the help of pressure, food is turned and driven into until it reaches the stomach easily.

But even, if the food that reaches the stomach is composed of bread, fruits, meat, etc, in such a state it does not avail to make flesh, blood and bones in the body. But it should be cooked in a particular way in order to be fitting for the body to get benefit from. In this connection, Allah Almighty created the stomach in the form of a sack in which food falls, thereupon it closes tightly, and it remains in it until it is fully digested with the help of the hot liquid. This heat is caused by the organs that surround the stomach from all sides: the liver on the right side, spleen on its left side, outer flesh of the belly in the front of it and the flesh of the loin on its back. By virtue of such heating, the food is cooked until it turns into a liquid fitting for passing through veins. But at that point, it is still like the water of parley, unfitting yet for nourishment.

At that level, Allah Almighty created veins to connect the stomach with the liver, having many openings through which liquid of food is poured until it reaches the liver. The liver is made from the same blood of the body. It has many capillaries spreading through its different parts with which the liquid of food is mixed and resides for a period of time until it turns into blood, fitting for the nourishment of the body. But as this cooking is caused by the heat of liver, two kinds of waste matters are produced from the blood: the black and yellow bile, and were they not to be separated from the blood, the body would be damaged.

For this purpose, Allah Almighty created both gallbladder and spleen, and provided each with a narrow part extending inside the cavity of the liver in order for the gallbladder to draw to itself the bile, and the spleen the black, leaving the blood pure to a great extent.

But, the blood at that level still has some extra liquid, and but for such liquid, it would be hard to spread through those capillaries and come therefrom up towards the different organs. For this purpose, Allah Almighty created both kidneys, and provided each with a narrow part extending towards the liver. It is one of the wonders of the wisdom of Allah Almighty that they do not enter into the cavity of the liver, but rather are connected with it through the veins that emerge from outside the liver, in order for them to draw food after passing through the capillaries of the liver, for were they to draw it before passing through the capillaries of the liver, it would be still thick, to hard to come out of the veins. Once water is separated from it, the blood then becomes extremely pure and clean from those three waste matters.

On the other hand, Allah Almighty created so many veins extending from outside the liver into all parts of the body from the toes to the head, externally and internally. In those various veins, the pure blood circulates and reaches everywhere in the body. Those veins gradually become fine until they turn in the end to capillaries like those on the leafs of the plant, too minute to see with the mere eye. It is through those capillaries that food reaches all parts of the body. If some disorder befalls the gallbladder, and it fails to draw to it the bile, the blood would get spoiled causing such diseases as icterus (yellows), pustule, etc; and if any disorder befalls the spleen and it fails to draw the black bile, many diseases would occur like vitiligo, leprosy and melancholia; and if both kidneys fail to draw the water from the blood, this would cause many diseases like dropsy and others.

Then, consider how the Wise Creator based the benefits on those despicable waste matters. The gallbladder draws the yellow bile and ejects it into the large intestines, whereas the spleen turns the black bile into acidity to stimulate the desire for hunger with the help of a part thereof, and eject the remaining into the large intestines: and both constitute excretion. As for both kidneys, they take provision from the blood that is in the liquid and send the remaining water to the bladder (to come out in the form of urine).

Let's be satisfied with that amount of explication of the favors of Allah Almighty concerning the causes and means of eating. Were we to mention how the liver needs the brain and heart, and how the heart needs both, or how those main organs need each other, and how the veins and arteries ramify from the heart and liver into all parts of the body, through which sense and nutrition reach everywhere in the body, and how all organs and parts of the body are composed: were we to mention all of this, and all is necessary for eating, the speech would be too lengthy. Man, for example, has thousands of muscles and nerves and millions of blood cells, different in size, shape and intensity. There is nothing thereof without one, two to ten wisdoms to lie behind it. All of those are among the favors bestowed by Allah upon you. If a still vein moves, or a moving vein

becomes still improperly, you would be given to destruction.

Consider then the favors of Allah upon you: would you not have afterwards power to give thanks to Him? You do not know of the favors of Allah in this respect but eating, which is the most trivial among them all. You do not know but that whenever you grow hungry, you would eat, in which the donkey shares you. That is because the donkey knows that whenever it grows hungry, it would eat; whenever it gets tired, it would sleep; and whenever it is moved by sexual desire, it would have sexual intercourse. If you do not know about yourself more than the donkey knows about itself, how then would you offer gratitude for the favor of Allah Almighty upon you?

All what we have mentioned is but a single drop of a huge ocean of the favors of Allah Almighty. So, measure what we have not mentioned on that we have mentioned. Indeed, all what the people know in comparison with what they know not of the favors of Allah Almighty is less than a single drop of a huge ocean. But whoever knows anything of that would perceive a part of the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " But if you count the favours of Allah, never will you be able to number them. Verily, man is given up to injustice and ingratitude." (Ibrahim 34)

﴿ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾

Furthermore, consider how Allah Almighty connected the subsistence, forces, benefits and perceptions of those organs and parts of the body through a fine vapor that erupts from the mixture of the four humors. Its residence is the heart therefrom it circulates everywhere in the body through the extending veins. It never reaches a part of the body but that it provides it with what it needs of sense, perception and power of movement. It is like the lamp that is turned throughout the different parts of the house, and it does not reach a part but that it lights it up, and its illumination is reflected on the remaining parts. This light is the creation of Allah Almighty, but He made the lamp a cause of it, by His wisdom. This fine vapor is what the physician call spirit.

Its residence is the heart. Its example is like the fire of the lamp, the heart like the cresset, the black blood that is inside the heart like the fuse, provision like the oil, and the apparent life in the different organs and parts of the body because of it like the light of the lamp. As well as if the oil of the lamp is consumed the lamp would be extinguished, the lamp of the spirit would fade away once the provision is withheld from it; and as well as the fuse might burn and turn into ashes which accepts not the oil to be kindled once again, with the result that the lamp would be extinguished although the oil is available, similarly, the blood might burn because of the scorching heat of the heart, and be used up although the provision is available. As well as the lamp might be extinguished due to an internal or external cause like a stormy wind, the light of the spirit might be extinguished due to an internal or external cause like killing. As well as the lamp is extinguished, whatever the cause might be, according to a Divine decree ordained by Allah, similarly the spirit also is extinguished, whatever the cause might be, once its owner comes to its appointed term ordained by Allah Almighty. As well as if the light of the lamp is extinguished the entire house would darken, similarly, if the

spirit vanishes, the whole body would darken, and lose all lights it used to get from the spirit, i.e. the lights of sense, power and will.

You may argue: "You have talked about spirit and described it, although when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about it he said no more than: "The spirit is by the command of my Lord." (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ رَبِّي ﴾

Thus he did not describe it to them in the same way you have done." In reply to that, let me say: It should be known to you that this argument is based on heedlessness of the different meanings given to the term spirit. Regardless of all its meanings, we intend by it that subtle tenuous substance of an ethereal sort, which the physicians call spirit. They recognize its qualities and characteristics, how it circulates in the different organs and parts of the body, bringing about sense and faculties, to the extent that if a part of the body is anesthetized, they would learn that this is due to occlusion of a part of the channel in which the spirit circulates, thereupon they would not remedy that very part, but rather treat the place of occlusion where the nerve of that particular part originates. This tenuous substance, with its subtleties, penetrates into the network of nerves, by which the heart is connected with all parts of the body.

But as to the soul which gives life to the body in the sense that if it leaves the body, it will be ruined by death, of a surety, it is one of the greatest mysteries of Allah Almighty. It is indescribable, and it is not fitting for us to describe it. All to say about it is to describe it as a Divine affair as confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: " Say, "The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little."" (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ رَبِّي ﴾

Of a surety, the Divine affairs are beyond the capacity of human minds to describe, for the minds of most people are put to confusion about it. That is because it is not for the mind to perceive such supreme things which are perceived by another light, more honorable and higher than the mind. It rises in the world of Prophethood and alliance (with Allah Almighty). Its relation to the mind is like the relation of the mind to illusion and fancies.

Allah Almighty created the people and made them pass through many phases: as well as the child perceives only the concrete things apart from the abstract for he has not attained the phase of perceiving such high things, the adult perceives the abstract but not the metaphysical things for he has not attained yet the phase of perceiving such things. Indeed, it is a noble station, a sweet drink, and a high rank in which the Gardens of truth is seen with the light of faith and certainty. That drink is too honorable to be available to every comer. It is said that whoever does not recognize himself does not recognize his Lord. How should such be made available to the science of medicine? Since the minds with which obligations are made are short of perceiving such high things, Allah Almighty gave no permission to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be

upon him" to talk to the people about it: but rather He commanded him to address them according to their limited minds. Allah Almighty did not mention in His Holy Book anything about the real nature of this matter. He rather mentioned its ascription to Him as one of His affairs, and its act in His statement: "(To the righteous soul will be said:) "O (you) soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction! Come back you to your Lord, well pleased (yourself), and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter you, then, among My Devotees! Yea, enter you My Heaven!"" (Al-Fajr 27-30)

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيَّتُهَا ٱلنَّفْسُ ٱلْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ ٱرْجِعِىٓ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾ فَٱدْخُلِى فِى عِبَـٰدِى ﴿٢٩﴾ وَٱدْخُلِى جَنَّتِى ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

Thus He Almighty did not describe its very essence.

The Fourth Side: The Favors Of Allah Almighty As Regards The Sources Of Food

It should be known to you that there are numerous kinds of food, and there are many wonders as for creating them by Allah Almighty. But to mention that in all kinds of food is so much lengthy. However, the food might be medicine, fruits or nutrition. Let's satisfy ourselves with the nutrition, for it represents the most important fundament. Let's also limit ourselves to a single grain of wheat and leave the others.

If you find one or more grains of wheat which you eat, they would inevitably be consumed and you would also remain hungry. For this reason, you need to have them grow and produce more grains in order to satisfy your need and the need of others. Allah Almighty created in the grain of power what nourishes it until it grows up, just as He created in your body. Plant differs from you in regard with sense and movement, but not in nourishment, for it is nourished by water which it draws to itself by way of roots, just as you are nourished. As well as both wood and dust avail not in nourishing you and you need a particular food to be nourished therewith, the grain is not nourished by all things, but it needs a particular thing. In confirmation of that, if you leave the grain in the house, it would not grow for nothing surrounds it but the air, and only the air avails not to nourish it. Similarly, if you leave it in the water, it would not grow, and if you leave it in a ground where there is no water, it would also not grow. In order to grow, it requires an earth where there is water. To this fact Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " Then let man look at his Food, (and how We provide it): For that We pour forth water in abundance, And We split the earth in fragments, And produce therein Corn, And Grapes and nutritious Plants, And Olives and Dates, And enclosed Gardens, dense with lofty trees, And Fruits and Fodder, For use and convenience to you and your cattle." (Abasa 24-32)

﴿ فَلْيَنظُرِ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِهِۦٓ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَنَّا صَبَبْنَا ٱلْمَآءَ صَبًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ شَقًّا ﴿٢٦﴾ فَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَحَدَآئِقَ غُلْبًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَفَـٰكِهَةً وَأَبًّا ﴿٣١﴾ مَّتَـٰعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَـٰمِكُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

But even, only earth and water are insufficient, for were it to be left in a wet or salty land, it would die because of lacking air. This means that it needs an earth

open to air, where there is water in sufficient quantity. Therefore, the air does not move towards it by itself, but it needs wind to move it. To this fact Allah Almighty refers in His statement: "And We send the fecundating winds." (Al-Hijr 22)

﴿ وَأَرْسَلْنَا ٱلرِّيَـٰحَ لَوَٰقِحَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

Its duty is to accommodate between water, air and earth. However, all of this would avail not if you are in severe cold, for you need the moderate atmosphere of spring, and the heat of summer. Those then are the four elements required for the growth of the plant.

Consider what should each need: Water is needed to be drawn to the cultivated land from rivers, springs and wells. See how Allah Almighty created rivers, caused the land to gush forth springs and wells. Furthermore, the land might be elevated to the extent that water could not reach it easily. But Allah Almighty created the clouds and made it under the control of wind to drive it to that elevated cultivated land in order for water to reach it through raindrops along the year according to the required need. Consider also how He created mountains to preserve water, therefrom springs and wells gush forth gradually for were it to come out all at once, surely, the land would drown, and the farms and life stalk would ruin entirely. To be sure, the favors of Allah concerning the mountains, clouds, rivers and springs are beyond calculation.

As for heat, although both land and water are cold, the atmosphere is hot. Consider here how He created sun and subjugated it to serve as heater for the land, although it is very remote from it. This heating differs from time to time and from place to place, according to the required need. That is among the wisdoms that lie behind the creation of sun, given that its wisdoms are countless.

Therefore, if the plant of fruits is elevated from the earth, it would be dry and hard, and become in need of humidity to ripen it. Consider here how He Almighty created moon which, by screening the sun from the land at night, serves as cooler, ripening thereby the fruits and dying them, each according to its specific characteristics, by the decree of Allah, the Full if wisdom. For this reason, were trees to be in a place where sun does not rise and moon does not appear, they surely would be spoiled. Do you not see that the small tree is spoiled if it is shaded forever by a huge tree?

As well as sun is subjugated to heat the land, and the moon to dampen it, the same is true of all the stars in the sky: each of them is created to serve a certain benefit. The wisdom that lie behind the creation of each of them are beyond the capacity of any human mind to describe or enumerate. Had it not been for that, they would have been created in vain, in opposition to the statement of Allah Almighty: "Our Lord! not for naught have you created (all) this!" (Al Imran 191)

﴿ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَـٰذَا بَـٰطِلًا ﴿١٩١﴾ ﴾

And: " Not for (idle) sport did We create the heavens and the earth and all that is between!" (Al-Anbiya 16)

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَٰعِبِينَ ﴾

As well as there is in your body no organ without a benefit, there is no member in the celestial body without a benefit. The entire world is like one body, and its components like the members and organs of the body which co-operate together in the same way as yours co-operate inside your body. To explain this issue would take us a very long time and place.

Think not that to believe that the sun, the moon and all the stars are subjugated by Allah to serve particular benefits and advantages for man contradicts Sharia, due to the forbiddance to trust the astrologers. Only two things are forbidden in astrology: One is to trust that they are independent in doing and achieving their outcomes and traces by themselves, and that they are not subjugated to be under the control of the power and will of the Creator Who created and overpowered them. That is evidently disbelief. The other is to give trust to the astrologers about the detailed news they bring which not all people perceive. That is because they say what they say out of ignorance. Astronomy and its rules and principles represented a miracle of one of the Prophets "peace be upon them". But later on, it was obliterated, and nothing but confusing mixed traces remained in which the right could hardly be distinguishable from the wrong.

To believe that the stars are means, in a way or another, of many effects to occur on earth, in the plants and the animals, but by the will and decree of Allah Almighty, does not contradict the religion for it is true. But to claim the knowledge of the rules and principles that determine it decisively disagrees with religion. If you have a garment which you have washed and liked to dry, and somebody told you to bring it out and spread it for the sun has risen and it has become very hot, you are required neither to give trust nor to give lie to him. Similarly, if the colour of somebody's face has changed and he told you, in justification, that sun touched his complexion on the way, blackening his face, you are not required to deny his speech. Measure all things on that parable. But all the facts are known in part and unknown in part, in which to claim knowledge is impermissible; and even the known among them is not learnt by all the people. Some are known to all like the fact that heat ensues from sun, and others are not known to all the people like saying that the cold results from exposing one's head to the emerging moon. The point here is that the stars have not been created in vain: on the contrary, countless number of wisdoms lie behind creating them.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" looked at the sky and then recited the statement of Allah Almighty: "Our Lord! not for naught have you created (all) this! Glory to You! Give us salvation from the Penalty of the Fire." (Al Imran 191)

﴿ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴾

Then, he said: "Woe to him who recited that Holy Verse and then did not take heed of it." (Ath-Tha'alibi on the authority of Ibn Abbas). It is to recite the Qur'an without considering it, i.e. to be satisfied with knowing from the dominion of the heaven only its colour and light of the stars, in which even the

animals share you. Indeed, Allah Almighty has countless wonders in the dominion of the heaven and the earth in the horizons and in the beings, and the lover of Allah Almighty should endeavor to know of them as much as is possible for him to know. It is known that whoever loves a religious scholars seeks to get his compositions in order to increase in love for him with the help of his knowledge. The same is true of the wonders of the making of Allah Almighty. all the entire world is the making and creation of Allah Almighty. nay! All human compositions and makings are out of His creation and composition. If you wonder at a particular composition, do not wonder at the composer in so much as at the One Who subjugated him to compose it in such a way as you see.

The point is that the nourishment of the plant is obtained only with the help of the water, air, earth, sun, moon, stars: all of those could not run but in their orbs, and with the help of heavenly angels who move them perpetually. There are so many farther reasons which we have left for they are irrelevant to our issue. But now, let's be satisfied with what we have mentioned.

The Fifth Side: The Favors Of Allah Almighty Concerning The Means By Which Food Reaches You

It should be known to you that not all kinds of food exist everywhere in the world, for the existence of any kind of food is determined by particular conditions for it to be available in a certain place. The people are spread on the surface of the earth, and in many cases, food is far from them, and there are rivers, oceans, seas or any separating hindrances between them and it. Consider here how Allah Almighty subjugated traders and merchants to transfer goods and commodities from one place to another, and invested with authority over them the love and greed for wealth and profit, for which they undergo trouble and suffering in order to bring food to you as well as to others in any place throughout the earth.

Consider also how Allah Almighty taught them the profession of making ships and sailing aboard them. Consider also how Allah Almighty created animals and subjugated them as vehicles and means of transportation. Consider how the camel is created, how the horse is provided with the quick movement, how the donkey is made patient to endure trouble and hardship, how the camel is able to cut the long distance amidst the desert for many consecutive days without food or drink. Consider also how Allah Almighty made it easy for those merchants to proceed through the land from one place to another by way of ships, vehicles and riding mounts, carrying food and all needs to you. Allah Almighty created all of this not only to meet the need, but also as much as beyond the required needs. To enumerate all is impossible and will take us far from our issue. So, let's satisfied with what we have mentioned.

The Sixth Side: Preparation Of Food

It should be known to you that what grows in the land or among the animals (i.e. what is fitting to eat) could not be eaten in the very state in which it really exists. But each should be prepared in a particular way until it becomes fit for eating. To enumerate all things implied in that matter is beyond the capacity of

the context. Let's limit our consideration to a single loaf and see what is needed for it to be ready for eating.

The first step is to sow the seed in the ground and take care of it by watering, tilting, and cleaning up the land from the grass until it grows and becomes wheat, parley, etc. such crop needs to be harvested and rubbed (to be removed from its ears) until it turns into grains, to be ground as baking powder and then made into dough and baked in the oven to turn into bread in the form of a loaf. Consider the number of those processes and the equivalent number of the persons who undertake them as we have mentioned, and the number of the equipment and instruments required for them to be achieved perfectly, and the number of those we have not mentioned. Consider also the number of the persons involved in the making of bread with its related industries: the making of instruments, grinding, baking, manufacturing ovens and places of baking, etc. Consider the need of each of those makers, carpenters and ironsmiths to iron, wood, copper, lead, etc. consider also how Allah Almighty created mountains, stones and minerals in the ground, and made the earth like adjacent pieces, different in size, shape and the things they contain.

If you inspect the matter, you would know, O poor man, that a single loaf would not become in the very shape you eat it without more than one thousand makers to share in making it, beginning from the King Who drives the clouds and sends rain for the plant to grow in the earth passing through the angels and ending with the work of man. Consider the great deal of work of man in those instruments to the extent that the small and little needle therewith you sew the dress to protect you against the cold and heat could not become like this without more than twenty-five makers to share in making it. Had Allah Almighty not gathered the countries and subjugated the people to work in them, and had you been in need of any of them, you would have lost almost your lifetime without getting a single loaf in the very state you find it. Do you not see how Allah Almighty guided man whom He created from a despicable sperm-drop to do those wonderful and amazing works?

The Seventh Side: Preparation Of Makers

It should be known to you that if the makers and workers involved in the manufacture of bread disagree with and oppose each other in opinion and thought, and dispute with each other over what they do, they would avail anyone in naught. Consider here how Allah Almighty joined their hearts in love and made them sociable to, and intimate with each other: " And (moreover) He has put affection between their hearts: not if you had spent all that is in the earth, could you have produced that affection, but Allah has done it: for He is Exalted in might, Wise." (Al-Anfal 63)

﴿ وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾ ﴾

It is by virtue of that affection and love, and due to their being sociable beings, that they gather together, build and inhabit cities and towns, make houses near to each other and to the market places, and so forth.

But this love might disappear because of their competition over the limited number of things, due to the envy, anger and competition on which man is predisposed by nature, which lead, in most cases, to fighting and disliking each other. Consider then how Allah Almighty invested rulers and governors with authority over the people and provided them with power and cast terror of them in the hearts of people, and how He Almighty guided the rulers and governors to reform the countries and arrange their affairs and make their parts like the parts of a single body, co-operating with each other for the mutual benefits. They made the chiefs, judges, prison and market places to serve for the benefits of people. They obliged the people to abide by the law of justice and equality, and forced them to help each other and co-operate with each other, each according to his power and profession, in order that they would get benefit from each other, by virtue of their arrangement, gathering and discipline under the authority of the ruler and governor, just in the same way as the different parts of the one body co-operate and get benefit from each other.

Then, consider how Allah Almighty sent the Prophets "peace be upon them" to guide the rulers and governors who take care of the affairs of the people, and show to them the laws of Sharia and religion to maintain justice among the people, and the laws of politics to discipline and rule them. They revealed to them of the judgements of jurisprudence and ruling what is helpful for them to reform their world and religion. Consider how He Almighty repaired the Prophets "peace be upon them" with the angels, and the angels with each other, and so forth until it ends up to the angel that is brought near to Allah Almighty, who acts as an intermediary between them and Allah Almighty.

To return to the point, the baker bakes the dough; The grinder grinds the grains; the farmer farms the plant by taking care of it until it turns into grains to be harvested; the ironsmith makes the equipment of farming; the carpenter makes the equipment of the ironsmith; and the same is true of all makers and manufacturers of food. The ruler reforms the makers; and the Prophets "peace be upon them" reform the learned scholars who are their heirs; and the learned scholars reform rulers; and angels "peace be upon them" reform Prophets; and so forth until the matter ends up to the Presence of the Lordship, which is the spring of each system, the source of beauty, the fountainhead of all arrangements and harmony. All of this is out of the favors of Allah Almighty, the Lord of all lords, and the Causer of all causes.

Had it not been for His bounty and grace, we would have not been guided to that small deal of His favors in confirmation of His saying: " And those who strive in Our (Cause), We will certainly guide them to Our Paths: for verily Allah is with those who do right." (Al-Ankabut 69)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُواْ فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴾

Had He not impeded us from aspiration, with the eye of ambition, to encompass in knowledge all of His favors, we would have been longing for that. But He Almighty kept us from that when He said: " But if you count the favours

of Allah, never will you be able to number them. Verily, man is given up to injustice and ingratitude." (Ibrahim 34)

﴿ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾

If we speak, it is by His will that we talk in detail; and if we keep silent, it is by His oppression, for none gives what He withholds, and none withholds what He gives. At every moment during lifetime, we hear, with the hearing of the hearts, the call of the Irresistible King: " Whose will be the Dominion that Day? That of Allah, the One, the Irresistible!" (Ghafir 16)

﴿ لِّمَنِ ٱلْمُلْكُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۖ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

Praise be to Allah Who distinguished us from the disbelievers, and made us able to hear that call before the termination of life.

The eighth side: exposition of the favors of Allah concerning the creation of angels "peace be upon them"

The favor of Allah concerning the creation of angels "peace be upon them" in terms of reforming the Prophets, guiding them and reporting to them the Divine revelation is not hidden from you. But think not that their role is limited to that. They are of three classes: The earthly angels, the heavenly angels and the carriers of the Throne (of majesty). Consider then how Allah Almighty entrusted you to them concerning your food and nourishment as we have already mentioned, apart from their role of guidance and direction.

It should be known to you that each part of your body, if not of the plant could not be nourished without seven to ten to one hundred to more and more angels to whom it is entrusted. To explain that, it is well-known that nourishment means that a damaged part is replaced by another which turns in the end into blood, flesh and bone; and once it becomes flesh and bone you will have been nourished. But blood and flesh are powerless bodies which have neither knowledge nor freedom of choice. They neither move nor change by themselves. Their nature alone is not sufficient to cause them to move or change. Just as the wheat does not turn by nature into baking powder then dough, and then baked bread in the form of a circled loaf without makers to do so, the blood does not turn into flesh, bone and nerves without makers to do so. The makers inside the body are the angels, as well as the makers outside the body are the real men of one's city or village. Allah Almighty has bestowed His favors on you outwardly and inwardly. So, do not be heedless of His internal favors.

Let me say that an angel is required to draw food towards the flesh and bone, since food does not move by itself; and another angel is required to hold it; and a third one to give it the form of blood; and a fourth to cover it with flesh and veins or bone; and a fifth to push away the waste matter; and a sixth to join the new with the old bone and flesh; and a seventh to observe the proportion and match each with what befits it in shape, size and colour, lest the body would lose its harmony. To be sure, this internal geometry is vital and it is entrusted to one of the angels. Think not that the blood has the power to form itself in such a way

as you see by itself, for this is beyond its nature on which it is created; and ignorant is he who thinks so.

Those are the earthly angels who engage themselves with you, while you are asleep in comfort and heedlessness. They maintain nourishment inside your body, and you know not. This applies to all of your inseparable parts of body. Some parts, like the eye and the heart, need more than one hundred angels to maintain them. But we have left the detail of that matter in order not to be lengthy. The earthly angels are provided with the heavenly angels according to a specific order fathomed only by Allah Almighty. The heavenly angels, in turn, are provided with the carriers of the Throne (of Majesty). Their benefactor Who provides them with support, guidance and success is Allah, the Preserver of safety, the Holy one, Whose Alone is the kingship and dominion, power and honour. The narrations about the angels to whom it is entrusted the matter of the heavens and the earth, each part of the plants and animals, each single drop of rainfall and piece of cloud, and so forth are countless. So, we have turned away from quoting them.

You may argue: "Why do you not entrust all of those works to only one angel, and what is the need of seven angels? Wheat, for instance, needs somebody to grind it, another to refine it from the husk, a third to pour water over it, a fourth to make dough, a fifth to cut the dough to ball-shaped pieces, a sixth to make them fine broad loafs, and a seventh to get them into the oven to bake them. But only one could undertake all of those works. Why do the works of the angels inside the body not look like those of the people outside?"

In reply to that, it should be known to you that the creation of angels differs from that of men. Each angel has only one characteristic and no more; and this means that each of them could but do only one act. To this fact He Almighty refers in His statement: "Not one of us but has a place appointed." (As-Saffat 164)

﴿وَمَا مِنَّآ إِلَّا لَهُۥ مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿١٦٤﴾﴾

This is why there is no competition nor fighting between them: On the contrary, their example in their ranks and works is like the five senses. The sight does not compete hearing in perceiving sounds, nor does smelling compete sight in perceiving forms, and so on. But they differ from both hands and feet, for you might strike with the toes competing thereby the fingers, and you might beat another with your head, competing thereby the hand, which is the instrument of striking, and so forth.

Thus, they are not like the one man who could undertake by himself all works of grinding, making dough and baking. This is, to be sure, a kind of crookedness and deviation from justice, caused by the variance of man's characteristics and desires. He is not unilateral in attribute and act, unlike the angels. This is why man sometimes obeys Allah and sometimes disobeys Him due to the variance of his desires and attributes. But this is impossible for the nature of angels, who are predisposed to obedience of Allah Almighty. Undoubtedly, they " flinch not (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded." (At-Tahrim 6)

﴿ لَّا يَعْصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴾

They celebrate His glory night and day and never weaken to do so. Such as bowing among them is bowing forever, such as prostrating among them is prostrating forever, and such as standing among them is standing forever and so on. There is no disparity nor weariness in their acts and each of them has a place appointed beyond which he never goes.

Their submission to Allah Almighty in which there is no point of disobedience is like the submission of your organs to you in the sense that if you want to open your eyelid, it could but submit to you unless it is not sound. That is because it is under your disposal. This is the point in which it resembles the angels. But it differs from them in another point, i.e. your eyelid does so without knowledge of what it does, unlike the angels who are living and knowing of what they do.

This is the favor of Allah Almighty upon you concerning the earthly and heavenly angels and your need of them as far as food is concerned, apart from the other needs. To be sure, the classes of favors are beyond calculation. Allah Almighty has conferred his favors upon you outwardly and inwardly. Then He said: " Eschew all sin, open or secret: those who earn sin will get due recompense for their earnings." (Al-An'am 120)

﴿ وَذَرُوا۟ ظَٰهِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ ٱلْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَقْتَرِفُونَ ﴾

To leave the secret sins which are unknown by most people, like envy, evil assumption, religious innovation and concealment of evil against people, and the like of those hidden and secret sins of the heart, is to give thanks for the inward favor, and to leave the apparent sins committed by the organs and parts of body is to give thanks for the outward favor.

Let me say that whoever disobeys Allah Almighty even through a single minor sin, such as to open his eyelid where he should lower his gaze, has indeed proved ungrateful to the favors of Allah on him in the heavens, on earth and what is between them. However, all that is created by Allah in the heavens and on earth, including the angels, the plants, the animals, etc, is a favor He bestowed upon man from which each individual gets benefit. In each eye twinkle, there is a pair of favors bestowed by Allah Almighty: He Almighty created underneath each eyelid muscles and strings to connect it with the brain nerves with the help of which the eyelid opens and shuts. On each eyelid, there are black eyelashes, whose duty is to focus the light which is dispersed by whiteness. They are arrayed in one line in order to protect the eye from the small larva and insects, and also from the air molecules. In each single hair, there are two favors as regards its smooth root and thin figure. The interlacement of eyelashes has a greater favor. The air dust might hinder the eye from opening,, whereas the interlacement of eyelashes in such a way enables the eye to see through that net of hair, without closing completely. In this way, the net of hair prevents dust from harming the eye from without, but do not prevent the eye from seeing. Furthermore, if the eyeball is harmed by dust, the ends of eyelashes were created to serve, by closing, as polishers of a mirror.

Let's return to our issue and say that whoever looks at what is unlawful for him to look at has indeed proved ungrateful to the favors of Allah upon him concerning the eyelids. The eye could not do without the eyelids; and the eyelids could not do without the head; and the head could not do without the whole body; and the body could not do without the nourishment, i.e. the food; and the food could not be available without water, air, earth, sun, moon, and all the other things required for plants to grow; and nothing of that could do without the heavens; and the heavens could not function without the angels; and so on. All are like one thing whose members are connected with each other, in the same way as the parts of the body are connected with each other. Thus, by looking at what is unlawful for you to look at, you have been ungrateful to all favors on you, and there remains neither an orb, nor an angel, nor a plant, nor an animal nor a non-living being but that it curses you.

For this reason, it is related that the spot wherein people gather either curses them or invokes forgiveness upon them when they leave. It is also related that everything, including even the fish in the ocean, prays for forgiveness for the religious scholar; and that the angels send their curses upon the disobedient. All of this refers to the fact that the perpetrator of a sin done by an unlawful eye twinkle commits in fact a crime against all beings in the universe and dominion, which leads to his destruction unless he follows the evil deed with a good deed to erase it, and the curse is replaced with prayer for forgiveness, perchance Allah would turn to him in repentance.

Allah Almighty revealed to Job "peace be upon him": "O Job! There is no servant of mine from among mankind but that he has two angels with him: if he gives thanks to me for My favors on him, they would say: "O Allah! Increase him in favor, for You are fitting to be praised and thanked." So, be among the thankful and it is sufficient for a high rank to be near the thankful. I appreciate their gratitude and My angels invoke good upon them, places love them and foot traces weep for them when they leave."

As well as in each eye twinkle there are dozens of favors on man, you should know that in every breath taken in and out there are a pair of favors. By taking out a breath, the vapor, i.e. Carbone dioxide, comes out of the breast, and should it not come out, the heart would be ruined; and by taking in a breath, the essence of air, i.e. oxygen enters the breast, and should it not enter, the heart would be burnt due to its lack of oxygen. Every day and night consists of twenty-four hours, and every hour man takes in and out more than one thousand breaths, and every breath lasts about ten moments. Thus, you are under obligation to thousands of thousands of favors concerning each part of your body, if not each part of the components of this world. Consider then whether a thorough survey of that is imaginable.

When the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " But if you count the favours of Allah, never will you be able to number them " (Ibrahim 34)

﴿ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا ﴾

Was revealed to Moses "peace be upon him" he said: "O my God! How

should I give thanks to You and You have a pair of favors in each single hair of my body? You have made smooth its root and concealed its head." It is related in a particular narration that "Whoever does not know the favors of Allah on him in his food and drink, his knowledge is little and his punishment is due." All of what we have mentioned returns to the favor of food and drink on which you should consider all favors. The insightful never sees or thinks about anything in this world but that he verifies that Allah has a favor on him concerning it. So, let's leave the thorough detail for it is longing for what is beyond the reach.

Exposition Of Why People Are Diverted From Gratitude

It should be known to you that the people fall short of gratitude only because of their ignorance and heedlessness. They have been prevented by both ignorance and heedlessness from knowing the favors of Allah Almighty upon them; and it is unimaginable to give thanks for a favor before knowing it. Furthermore, if one knew such a favor, he imagined that it is sufficient for gratitude to say only with his tongue: "Praise be to Allah; thanks be due to Allah...", giving no attention to the fact that the real gratitude for a favor is to use it to fulfill the wisdom for which it has been intended, i.e. to obey Allah Almighty. But even, apart from both, nothing prevents man from gratitude except his overpowering desire on the one hand, and his submission to the control of Satan on the other hand.

There are many reasons for heedlessness of favors. Among them is that, at least the ignorant among the people, and how many are they, do not regard as favor such as common to the people in general in all their states; and this is why they do not give thanks for all we have above mentioned, for they are common to all the people in all of their states. Everyone of them does not see those favors unique to him in particular. They do not thank Allah for the oxygen they breathe, given that should it be kept away from them for a moment, they would be exposed to death; and should they be detained in a bathroom or a well full of moisture, they would get suffocated. If anyone of them was tested by it, and he then was saved, he might regard it a favor from Allah Almighty for which he would give thanks to Him.

It is the utmost ignorance to make one's gratitude for a favor conditional on its being taken away from him even for a moment, and then given back to him, in some cases. The favor is more entitled to be appreciated in all states. But you do not see the sighted, for instance, give thanks for his sound sight before he becomes blind. At that time, if his sight is restored to him, he would regard it a favor for which he would give thanks to Allah Almighty. Since the mercy of Allah Almighty is all-encompassing over all the people in general, the ignorant among them do not regard it a favor. The people do not give thanks but for the wealth which they own in particular, and forget all favors bestowed by Allah Almighty upon them.

One of those ignorant complained of his poverty to one endued with deep insight, who said to him: "Would you be pleased to be blind and have ten thousand Dirhams?" he answered in the negative. He further asked him: "Would you be pleased to be mute and have ten thousand Dirhams?" he answered in the

negative. He further asked him: "Would you be pleased to have your hands and legs cut off and have twenty thousand Dirhams?" he answered in the negative. He further asked him: "Would you be pleased to be mad and have ten thousand Dirhams?" he answered in the negative. He said to him: "Then, do you not feel shy of complaining your Lord Who has given you things equal to fifty thousand Dirhams?"

It is related that one of the reciters was given to severe poverty by which he was disturbed so much. He saw in a dream somebody asking him: "Do you like that we cause you to forget the Surah of Al-An'am and you have one thousand Dinars?" he answered in the negative. He asked: "Then, the Surah of Hud?" he answered in the negative. He asked: "Then, the Surah of Yusuf?" He answered in the negative. He counted many Surahs for him and the man gave the same answer each time. On that he said to him: "Then, do you complain of poverty although you have as much as one hundred thousand Dinars?" In the morning, his state of anxiety was over.

Once Ibn As-Sammak entered upon one of the caliphs who had a mug of water from which he was drinking. He asked him to give him admonition. He said: "Had you not been given that sip of water but for your whole property, otherwise you would have remained thirsty: Would you have given your property?" the caliph answered in the affirmative. He further asked him: "Had you not been given it but for your entire kingdom: would you have conceded it?" he answered in the affirmative. On that he said to him: "Then, rejoice not of a kingdom which is not equal to a sip of water." It seems then that the favor of Allah Almighty on a man concerning only a sip of water when he is thirsty is greater than the dominion of the entire earth.

If the people are predisposed, by nature, to consider only the particular favors apart from the public and general, let's mention briefly a set of the special favors. Let's say that no servant investigates his state but that he sees one or more favors unique to him in which only a limited number of people, and in some cases none shares him. This is acknowledged by man in three things: mind, character and knowledge.

As far as mind is concerned, there is no servant of Allah Almighty is displeased with Him as regards his mind: Each of them thinks he is the most intelligent among the people. One rarely asks Allah to provide him with mind. It is out of the honour of mind that the one lacking it rejoices with it in the same way as the one possessing it does. Hence, if one thinks himself the most intelligent of people, it is a favor for which he should give thanks to Allah Almighty. That is because if it is really so, thanksgiving is due upon him; and if it is not so, then, it is also a favor in his sight for which he should give thanks. If one buries a treasure, he rejoices with it and thanks Allah for it. If the treasure is taken without his knowledge, he continues to rejoice and be thankful as long as he thinks the treasure is still buried in its very place.

As regards moral character, there is no servant does not criticize the others for what seems to him from their deficiencies and shortcomings. He criticizes them as he sees himself free from these evils. Indeed, if he does not engage in

criticizing others, at least he should engage in giving thanks to Allah Almighty Who has made good his moral character and put the others to trial because of their bad character.

In relation to knowledge, there is no servant but that he knows well his internal thoughts and hidden ideas, and that which is unique to him alone. Were the veil to be removed and were his matter to be revealed to anyone else, he would be put to shame. How then do you think of him if all the people, and not only one, know his matter? Then, every servant knows about himself something in which none save Allah shares him. Why does he not then thank Allah Almighty for the favor of screening his evils and faults from the sight of people and disclosing only the good to them?

Those are three among the special favors of Allah Almighty with which all servants acknowledge. Now, let's move from this very special rank to one which is more general, saying that there is no servant from among the servants of Allah Almighty but that He endowed him, either in his person, physique, manners, attributes, residence, family, kinship, honour, or majesty, whether in some or in all of these he likes, with something so much important to him that if it is taken away from him, and given to anyone else, he would be displeased. It is like making him a believer instead of a disbeliever, a living being instead of a non-living being, a man instead of an animal, a male instead of a female, a sound instead of a sick, a perfect instead of a defective, etc. although those characteristics are almost general and common to a lot of people, if all or at least any of them is replaced with its opposite, he would be displeased with it.

In many cases, he would not accept that his state be replaced with the state of anyone else; and this means that his state, at least in his sight, is better than that of anyone else. Being so, he is then under obligation to Allah Almighty for His favors, unique to him alone and not to anyone else among His servants. If there is some whose state he accepts to replace his own state with, let him consider them, and he will soon know that these who seem better and higher than him in rank are lesser in number than those who seem inferior and lower than him. But, why does he look at such as higher than him in order to scorn the favors of Allah upon him? Why does he not look at such as inferior and lower than him in order to make much of the favors of Allah upon him? Why does he not make his world equal to his religion? Is it not that if his soul blames him for a sin he has committed, he apologizes justifying that there are a lot of sinners and dissolute men?

In religion, he considers such as inferior and lower than him, unlike the world in which he always considers such as higher and above him in rank. If most people are better than him in religion, and he is better than most people in the world, why should not he give thanks for that? This is why the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, who looks at such as higher and above him in religion, and at such as inferior and lower than him in the world, Allah writes him among the patient and thankful; and whoever looks at such as higher and above him in the world, and at such as inferior and lower than him in religion, Allah does not write him among the patient and thankful." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr).

Thus, whoever inspects his own state and considers what he is favored with apart from others, should affirm the Oneness of Allah Almighty for His favors He bestowed upon him uniquely, particularly he who is favored with following the sunnah, faith (in Allah and His Messengers and Books), knowledge and Qur'an. Ranking second to this is disengagement from concerns, health and security, and so on. For this reason, it is said (in the form of poetic verses): "Whoever likes to have abundant life and good religion, let him look at such as higher and better than him in piety, and at such as inferior and lower than him in wealth." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever does not become free of want with the Signs of Allah Almighty, may Allah not make him independent." This is a reference to the favor of knowledge. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Verily, the Qur'an is the richness beside which there is neither richness nor poverty." (Abu Ya'li and At-Tabarani on the authority of Anas). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said too: "He, whom Allah Almighty endowed with the favor of the Qur'an and thinks that there is anyone else richer and more wealthier than him, has indeed ridiculed the Signs of Allah Almighty." (Al-Bukhari in his Tarikh on the authority of Raja' Al-Fanawi). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "Not among us is he who does not get rich by the Qur'an." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "Sufficient is certainty (of faith) for richness." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Uqbah Ibn Amir).

One of the righteous predecessors said: Allah Almighty says in one of the Scriptures He revealed: "Indeed, I have made My servant independent from three things: I have perfected my favor on him and made him not in need of an authority to seize him, of a physician to remedy him, and of covet of what is in the hand of his brother." Of that meaning, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" expressed. It is narrated on the authority of Salamah Ibn Ubaidullah Ibn Mihsan Al-Ansari from his father that he said: The Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” said: “He, upon whom morning comes while being healthy and rest assured, having the sustenance of his day, seems as if (all of the) world has been combined for him.” (Ibn Majah).

If you consider the people, you would find almost all of them complaining and growing of things beyond those three, given that their consequence is evil upon them. They do not thank the favor of Allah upon him in those three. They do not thank Allah for the favor of faith with which they attain the abiding bliss and great dominion. The insightful is he who should rejoice only with the certainty of faith and knowledge. We know that there are from among the religious learned scholars such as if all the world is offered to him in return for his knowledge, he would reject the deal, thinking the favor of knowledge excels any favor else, since it leads him to come close to Allah Almighty in the hereafter. If he is promised to get what he expects in the hereafter, and rather is offered the pleasures of this world in return for the pleasure of knowledge, he would reject the deal for he knows well that the pleasure of knowledge is never-ending, unlike

the pleasures of the world.

We should not say that whoever turns away from the world suffers from patience on it, for whoever devotes himself to it also suffers from patience on preserving and obtaining it, and averting thieves and robbers from it. But there is difference between both: The pain of the one who turns away from the world leads him to the pleasure in the hereafter, whereas the pain of him who devotes himself to it brings about pain for him also in the hereafter. Let those who turn away from the world recite the following statement of Allah Almighty: " And slacken not in following up the enemy: if you are suffering hardships, they are suffering similar hardships; but you have hope from Allah, while they have none. And Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom." (An-Nisa' 104)

﴿ وَلَا تَهِنُوا۟ فِى ٱبْتِغَآءِ ٱلْقَوْمِ ۖ إِن تَكُونُوا۟ تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۖ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾

The way of gratitude has been closed in the face of people due to their ignorance of the apparent and hidden, private and public favors bestowed upon them by Allah Almighty.

You may ask: "What is the remedy of those heedless hearts in order to feel the favors of Allah upon them, perchance they would be grateful?" in reply to that, let me say that it is sufficient for the hearts of those endued with deep insight to consider the different kinds of the general favors of Allah Almighty we have already mentioned. But the hearts of the callous, who does not regard the favor as favor unless it is unique to him, or unless he is put to trial because of it, his way is to consider such as inferior to him in rank, and do what some Sufis did, who used to go everyday to the graves, hospitals and the places where the legal punishments were established. As for hospitals, he used to go to see the trial to which Allah put the sick and then regard his health, thereupon he would feel the favor of health upon him in comparison with the ordeal of ailment upon them, and then thank Allah Almighty for His favor.

He used to see the criminals who were to be killed, those whose organs cut off, or these who had to receive many types of punishment as a penalty for their crimes, thereupon he would give thanks to Allah Almighty for protecting him from such crimes and punishments, and thank Him for the favor of security and safety. He used to go to the graves and know that the dearest thing to the dead is to return to life even for as short as one day, in order for the sinner to reform himself, and the doer of good to do more good. The Day of Judgement is the day of mutual loss: the obedient will be given to loss for when he would see the recompense for his obedience, he would say: "I had power to do more acts of worship! How great is my loss for I have wasted long times in what is permissible." But the loss received by the sinner is self-evident. So, when one sees the graves, and knows that the dearest thing to the dead is to have in their lives as much as remains in his own life, he might devote the remaining of his life to do the things for which the dead desire to return to life. Having done so, he would know the value of the favors of Allah upon him

during the remaining portion of his life. If one knows that, he would give thanks, by devoting the remaining of his life to that for which life has been created, i.e. to take from the world provisions for the hereafter. This is the remedy of those hearts which are heedless of the favors of Allah, perchance they would be grateful.

Ar-Rabie Ibn Khaithamah, in spite of his deep insight, used to seek the aid of that way in confirmation of knowledge. He dug a grave in his house. He used to put a yoke in his neck and lie in it reciting: "O my Lord! send me back (to life), In order that I may work righteousness in the things I neglected." (Al-Mu'minun 99-100)

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱرْجِعُونِ ۝ لَعَلِّىٓ أَعْمَلُ صَٰلِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ ۝ ﴾

Then, he would stand and say: "O Rabie! You have been given what you asked for. Then, do righteous works before you ask for return and are given no answer."

Another thing to remedy the hearts which abstain to give thanks for favors is to know that if the favor is not appreciated, it would vanish. For this reason, Al-Fudail Ibn Iyad used to say: "I advise you to persist in gratitude for all favors, for almost no favor has been removed from the people and then returned to them once again." According to one of the righteous predecessors: "The favors are like wild animals. So, tie them with gratitude." According to a particular narration: "The more the favor of Allah upon a man is great, the more the people become in need of him. So, whoever deals with them slightly would expose such favor to disappear." (Ibn Adi and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Mu'adh Ibn Jabal). Allah Almighty said: " Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls). But when (once) Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back, nor will they find, besides Him, any to protect." (Ar-Ra'd 11)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا۟ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوٓءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَالٍ ۝ ﴾

THIRD PILLAR
THAT IN WHICH PATIENCE AND GRATITUDE SHARE AND ARE RELATED TO EACH OTHER

Exposition Of The Way In Which Patience And Gratitude Gather On One Thing

You may argue that what you have mentioned means that Allah Almighty has a favor in all that exists. But this requires that the ordeal is absent. Then, what is the significance of patience? If the ordeal is present, then, what is the significance of gratitude for ordeal? Some claim that we give thanks for ordeal just as we do for favor. Then, how is it imagined to give thanks for ordeal? How is it imagine to give thanks for that on which we should keep patient? It is well-known that patience on ordeal summons pain, whereas gratitude for favor

summons pleasure; and both pain and pleasure are opposing. What is the significance of the statement that Allah Almighty has a favor in all that He has brought to existence?

In reply to that, it should be known to you that both favor and ordeal exist, and the affirmation of favor requires the affirmation of ordeal, for both are opposing. The loss of ordeal is a favor, whereas the loss of favor is a ordeal. But we have already mentioned that the favor is divided into absolute favor, like, in the hereafter, the servant's permanent happiness to be in the neighbourhood of Allah Almighty, and, in the world, like faith and good manners and what helps one achieve them; and restricted favor, like wealth which reforms religion from one point and corrupts it from another point. Similarly, ordeal is divided into absolute and restricted. The example of the absolute ordeal is, in the hereafter, like the remoteness from the neighbourhood and presence of Allah Almighty, whether forever or for some time; and, in this world, like disbelief, disobedience and bad manners, and those lead to the absolute favor. The example of the restricted ordeal is, like poverty, ailment, fear, and all kinds of ordeals which belong to the world more than to the religion.

Thus, absolute gratitude should be for the absolute favor. But no patience is due in case of the absolute ordeal in this world. Disbelief is a ordeal, and patience on it is pointless, and the same is true of disobedience. It is incumbent upon the disbeliever and sinner to leave his disbelief and sin (rather than to keep patient on them). Every kind of ordeal which man is able to avert from himself, he should not keep patient on it. If one, for instance, leaves water until he is given to painful thirst, his patience on that is pointless; and it becomes incumbent upon him rather to remove the pain (by drinking) than to keep patient on it (as long as water is available). The real patience is that on a pain which a servant has no way to remove from himself.

Thus, patience in this world is on a ordeal which is not absolute. And as long as the favor is not absolute, it may probably be a ordeal from one point and a favor from another point. In this way, both duties of patience and gratitude are imagined to gather on it. Richness, for example, might be a cause of destruction of the rich, by being killed with his family because of his wealth; and the same is true of health, as well as of all the worldly favors. Similarly, the restricted ordeal might possibly turn into a favor. For a particular servant, poverty and ailment might be better for him, and were he to be healthy or rich, he would become transgressing arrogant. Allah Almighty said: " If Allah were to enlarge the provision for His Servants, they would indeed transgress beyond all bounds through the earth; but He sends (it) down in due measure as He pleases. For He is with His Servants Well-acquainted, Watchful." (Ash-Shura 27)

﴿ ۞ وَلَوْ بَسَطَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ لَبَغَوْاْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن يُنَزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِعِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

He further said: " Nay, but man does transgress all bounds, In that he looks upon himself as self-sufficient." (Al-Alaq 6-7)

﴿ كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ لَيَطْغَىٰٓ ۝٦ أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰٓ ۝٧ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty protects His servant whom He loves in this world, just as anyone of you protects his patient." (At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim).

The same is true of one's family, children and all things included under the sixteen kinds of favor: all save faith and good manners are imagined to be a ordeal on some people, and thus their opposites a favor on them. We have already mentioned that knowledge is perfection and favor for it is one of the attributes of Allah Almighty. But in some cases, it might turn into a ordeal and its loss a favor. A typical example is man's ignorance of his term appointed: It is a favor on him. Were he to know it, this would embitter his life. So is his ignorance of what men hide from him concerning his kinship and relatives: it is a favor on him; and were this to be revealed to him, he might probably become envious and resentful. So is his ignorance of the blameworthy characteristics of others: Were he to know them, he would dislike and harm them, which would be of evil consequence on him in the world and the hereafter. The same is true of Allah's concealment of the Day of Judgement, the Night of Power, the hour in which supplication receives answer on Friday, etc: All of this is a favor for it prompts one to endeavor more and more. This is the favor of Allah Almighty concerning ignorance.

It is true that there is a favor for Allah Almighty in all that exists. This applies to all things, and even the pain, in some cases, might also be a favor on him in whom it is created. The pain received by the disbelievers in the fire of Hell is a favor, if not on them, on the faithful believers, for the calamities of a people might avail others. Had Allah Almighty not created punishment therewith to punish some people, those blessed in joy would have not recognized the significance of their comfort in comparison with them. The joy of the inhabitants of Paradise is multiplied by thinking about the pains of the denizens of fire. Do you not see that the inhabitants of the earth does not rejoice with the sunlight given their dire need for it, just for it is common almost to all the people, nor do they rejoice with the adornment of the sky given that it excels their ornamentations on earth, just because it is generally common to all of them? It is true then that Allah Almighty has not created a thing without a wisdom lying behind it, nor has He created a thing without a favor in it, whether on all or at least on some of His servants. There is also, in the creation of ordeal a favor whether on the tried or on anyone else. What is then not an absolute favor nor an absolute ordeal is fitting for both duties of patience and gratitude to gather on it.

But you may argue: "But both are opposing: there is no patience but on anxiety, nor is there any gratitude but for joy. How then should they gather?" In reply, it should be known to you that a thing might be a cause of grief in some cases, which summons patience, and a cause of joy in other cases, which summons gratitude. In poverty, ailment, fear and ordeal in this world, there are five things for which the heedless should give thanks.

The first is that there is no ailment nor poverty which afflicts a man but that there is what is greater than it which might afflict him, for Allah's decrees are

infinite. Had one's ailment or poverty been multiplied by Allah Almighty, who would have averted it from himself? So, he should give thanks for receiving no greater than it in this world.

The second is that his calamity might have possibly been in his religion. A man asked Sahl: "A thief entered my house and stole my luggage. What should I do?" On that he said: "Thank Allah for had Satan entered your heart and corrupted your faith in the Oneness of Allah, what would you have done with it?" this is why Jesus "peace be upon him" sought with Allah in his supplication: "O Allah! Make not my calamity in my religion." Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I have not been tried with a ordeal without being under obligation to Allah concerning four favors in it: that it has not been in my religion; that it has not been more grievous than it; that I have not been deprived of pleasure because of it; and that I expect reward for it."

One of the masters of hearts had a friend, whom the ruler put in prison, and when he sent to him to inform him and complain to him, he told him to thank Allah. Then, the ruler punished him by beating, and when he sent to his friend to inform him and complain to him, he told him to thank Allah. Then, a Magian was brought and put in custody with him, and tied with the same fetter, and there was a link in his foot and another link in the foot of the Magian. Whenever anyone of them wanted to stand to answer the call of nature, the other would stand and go with him and wait until he would finish. He sent to his friend to inform him and complain to him, and he told him to thank Allah Almighty. He sent to him asking: "Until which time should I continue to thank Allah? Is there any ordeal more grievous than that?" his friend, the master of heart, said to him: "Had the same belt been put round your and his waists, what should you have to do?"

Whoever then is afflicted with a ordeal which he reflects well inwardly or outwardly, he would realize that he would have deserved what is more grievous than it sooner or later. If one hundred lashes are due on you, and you have been lashed only ten, then, you should give thanks to him who reduced the punishment from you. Similarly, whoever deserves that both his hands be cut off and only one has been cut off, he should give thanks to him who reduced the punishment from you. For this reason, an old respectable man was walking in the street when a bowl of ashes was poured on his head. On that he fell in prostration out of thankfulness to Allah Almighty. When he was asked about that he said: "I expected a bowl of fire to be poured on my head. And now since it was only ashes, it should be a favor."

You may argue: "But even, how should I rejoice given that I see that a group of people, though more disobedient and sinful than I am, and even the disbelievers, have not been afflicted with the same calamities and distresses as I have been?" in reply, it should be known to you that such of punishment and affliction as kept for the disbeliever is more and more, and he is given respite until he increases in sin and crime, as confirmed by Allah Almighty: " We grant them respite that they may grow in their iniquity: but they will have a shameful punishment." (Al Imran 178)

﴿ إِنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوٓاْ إِثْمًا ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾ ﴾

As for sins, how should you know that one is more sinful than another? It may be that only an evil passing thought occurs to the mind about Allah's attributes and acts is more sinful than drinking alcoholic drinks and committing fornication, and all sins to be committed with organs. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " and you thought it to be a light matter, while it was most serious in the sight of Allah." (An-Nur 15)

﴿ وَتَحْسَبُونَهُۥ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

How then should you come to know that anyone else is more sinful than you? It may be that his punishment has been deferred to the hereafter, whereas yours has been hastened on for you in this world, for which you should give thanks to Allah Almighty.

That is the third point of thankfulness, i.e. there is no punishment but that it is imagined that it should be deferred to the hereafter. To be sure, the calamities of this world might be alleviated and reduced by other means, unlike those of the hereafter which are constantly permanent, and would never be reduced by anything whatsoever. Whoever has his punishment hastened on for him in this world would not be punished for the same sin once again in the hereafter as stated by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "If a servant commits a sin and then is afflicted with a calamity or distress in this world, Allah Almighty is too generous to punish him for it once again in the hereafter." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Ali).

The fourth is that this affliction or calamity has been doomed to him in the Mother of the Book, and he should inevitably receive it sooner or later. But since he received it in this world, it was over for it was removed from him. Which comfort one might get better than this? To be sure, this is a favor in its own right.

The fifth is that the reward he would get for it is more. However, the calamities of this world are ways to the hereafter from two perspectives:

The first perspective is in the same way as the hateful medicine is a favor on the patient, and the prevention of a child from playing is a favor on him, for were he to be left to play as much as he liked, this would have impeded him from acquisition of knowledge and etiquettes, losing thereby his entire lifetime. Similarly, the wealth, family, relatives, organs and parts of body, including even the eye, the dearest to man, might be a cause of his destruction in many cases; and also the mind, the greatest and the most valuable, might lead to destruction. The atheists would hope, in the hereafter, that had they been mad or lost their mind in this world before they behaved in the religion of Allah with their minds in the very manner that led to their destruction.

There is nothing but that man should imagine that he has a religious good therein. Thus, he should have good assumption about Allah Almighty, and estimate that it is good for him for which he should give thanks to Allah. The wisdom of Allah is all-embracing and He is more acquainted with the benefits and interests of His servants. In the morrow, the servants would thank Allah for the ordeals when they see the reward they would receive for them from Allah Almighty, just as the child, after maturity and attainment of the age of puberty, thanks his mister and father for beating and disciplining him until he was able to

acquire knowledge. To be sure, the ordeal from Allah Almighty is out of discipline, and He takes care of His servants more perfectly and completely than fathers do of their children.

In this connection, it is narrated that a man said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Advise me." He said: "Do not abuse Allah in anything He has decreed on you." (Ahmad and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ubadah). In another context, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" looked at the sky and then laughed. When he was asked about that he said: "I wonder at the Divine Decree of Allah for the faithful believer: if He decrees prosperity for him, he would be pleased, and it is good for him; and if He decrees adversity for him, he would be pleased, and it is good for him." (Muslim on the authority of Suhaib).

The other perspective is that the source of destructive sins is the love for this world, and the source of means of salvation is to desert with heart from the abode of deception. to receive favors as much as one likes without being mixed with ordeals and distresses summons self-assurance and intimacy to this world until it comes to be like Paradise for him. This is why he feels much pain at death because of his would-be departure from it. But if he suffers much trials and ordeals, he would be disturbed and annoyed by it, with the result that it would turn to be a prison for him, and his salvation from it would be the greatest pleasure he could ever have, for it would be like salvation from the prison. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "This world is the believer's prison and disbeliever's Paradise." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah). The disbeliever stands for such as turns away from Allah Almighty, and intends nothing but the life of this world with which he is reassured and pleased. The faithful believer stands for such as wholeheartedly absconds from this world and has much longing for departure from it. Disbelief is apparent in part and hidden in part. As much as one loves the world, the hidden polytheism circulates in his body. The absolute Unitarian is he who loves only (Allah) the One, the Real.

That is the perspective from which the trial has favors with which man should rejoice. The feeling of pain here is necessary. It is like your pleasure, when you are in dire need to get yourself cupped, with a cupper who volunteers to cup you, or, when you are in need of medicine, with the physician who volunteers to give you medicine, no matter painful or bitter the cupping or medicine might be. You feel pain and pleasure at the same time. You keep patient on pain, and give thanks for the cause of pleasure. Any worldly trial is like the medicine which seems painful at the moment and beneficial in the future. If a man entered the house of a king in which he saw a beautiful woman, he would dislike to come out of it no matter how evil it might be to him for he would be affable with a house in which he could not stay any longer. Should his stay in it put him to the risk of causing the king to see and thus punish him for that, and at the same time, should something hateful happen to him which forced him to come out (before the king's arrival), it would be a favor on him.

The world then is an abode, which people enter from the gate of the

womb and come out of it from the gate of the grave. What makes them affable with the abode is an ordeal; and what disturbs their hearts from it and interrupts their intimacy to it is a favor on them. Whoever knows that well is imagined to give thanks for trials as well as for favors; and whoever does not know that is unimagined to give thanks for them, for gratitude follows the knowledge of the favor. Whoever does not believe that the reward he would receive for the calamity is greater than the calamity itself is unimagined to give thanks for the calamity.

It is related that a Bedouin consoled Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with both" for the death of his father, saying: "Be patient, so that we would be patient with you, for the patience of the wards always follows that of their head. The reward you would receive after Al-Abbas is better than him; and Allah is better than you to Al-Abbas." On that Ibn Abbas commented: "None has ever consoled me better than him." However, there are so many narrations about keeping patient on calamities. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whomever Allah intends good for, He afflicts him (with calamities in this world to purify him)." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: Allah Almighty says: "If I afflict anyone of My servants with a calamity in this world which he receives with good patience, I would feel shy, on the Day of Judgement, to set up a balance or spread a scroll for him (to reckon him)." the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "No servant is afflicted with a calamity for which he says as he is commanded by Allah Almighty to say, i.e. "We all are to Allah, and to Him we all shall return. O Allah! Reward me for my calamity, and give me a better recompense", but that Allah Almighty does that for him." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said too: Allah Almighty says: "He, from whom I have taken away his two cherished organs (i.e. his eyes), his reward would be the eternal stay in My House (Paradise), and the (honour of) looking at My Countenance."

It is related that a man said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! I have lost my property, and my body has become faint." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No good lies in him who does not lose his property and whose body does not become faint. Verily, if Allah loves a servant, He would put him to trial, and if He puts him to trial, He would cause him to be patient." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "A man might have a rank with Allah Almighty which he does not attain with a deed until he is afflicted by Allah in his body; and it is by this that he then attains it." (Abu Dawud on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Khalid As-Sulami from his father from his grandfather).

It is narrated on the authority of Khabbab Ibn Al-Aratt "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We complained to The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" (of the persecution inflicted on us by the

infidels) while he was sitting in the shade of the Ka'bah, leaning over his Burdah (i.e. covering sheet). We said to him, "Would you seek help for us? Would you pray to Allah for us?" the colour of his face changed into red and he said: "Among the nations before you a (believing) man would be put in a ditch that was dug for him, and a saw would be put over his head and he would be cut into two pieces; yet that (torture) would not make him give up his religion. His body would be combed with iron combs that would remove his flesh from the bones and nerves, yet that would not make him abandon his religion. By Allah, this religion (i.e. Islam) will prevail till a traveler from Sana (in Yemen) to Hadramaut will fear none but Allah, or a wolf as regards his sheep, but you (people) are hasty." (Al-Bukhari).

It is related on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: "Whoever is put in prison by the ruler wrongfully and he dies, is a martyr; and if he is beaten until he dies, he would be a martyr." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "It is out of honouring and respecting Allah Almighty not to complain of your pain nor make a mention of your calamity." According to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him": "You give birth (children) to die, inhabit (the earth) to be destroyed later, covet of what is perishable and leave what remains. Behold! How good are the three hateful things: ailment, poverty and death." It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If Allah intends good for a servant and wants to purify him, He would pour trials and afflictions on him. If he invokes Him, the angels would say: "This voice is known to us." If he invokes Him once again saying: "O Lord!" He would say: "I am responding to your call O My servant, and all happiness be in your hand. You would ask Me for nothing but that I would give it to you or avert from you and keep with Me for you what is better." When it is the Day of Judgement, the people of good deeds would be brought and given their reward in full according to the balance of deeds: prayer, fasting, almsgiving and Hajj; and when the people of trials and afflictions are brought, no balance nor scroll would be made to them: the reward would be poured on them in the same way as trials and afflictions were poured on them in the world. At that time, the people who were healthy in this world would like that were their bodies to be filed with files, for the reward they would see the tried people would get apart from them. This is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!" (Az-Zumar 10)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that one of the Prophets made a complaint to his Lord saying: "O Lord! The believer obeys You and avoids sins, but you keep away the world pleasures from him and bring trials before him, whereas the disbeliever disobeys You and dares to commit sins, but You keep away trials from him and bring the world pleasures before him." On that Allah Almighty revealed to him: "All trials and servants belong to Me, and all celebrate My praises. It may be that a believer has

committed sins, thereupon I keep away the world pleasures from him and bring trials before him instead to make expiation for his sins until he meets Me to be rewarded according to his good deeds. Therefore, the disbeliever might have good deeds, thereupon I enlarge sustenance for him and keep away trials from him, in order to be rewarded according to his good deeds in this world until he meets Me to be requited according to his evil deeds."

It is narrated that when Allah Almighty revealed: " whoever works evil, will be requited accordingly. Nor will he find, besides Allah, any protector or helper." (An-Nisa' 123)

﴿ مَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا يُجْزَ بِهِۦ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴾

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" said: "How should one rejoice after that Verse?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "May Allah forgive for you O Abu Bakr! Do you not fall ill? do you not receive harm? Do you not grieve? It is with this that you are requited (for your evil works)." (At-Tirmidhi and others). It is narrated on the authority of Uqbah Ibn Amir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If you see that a man is given what he likes although he persists in sin, you should know that he is seized by degrees." Then, he recited the following statement of Allah Almighty: " But when they forgot the warning they had received, We opened to them the gates of all (good) things, until, in the midst of their enjoyment of Our gifts, on a sudden, We called them to account, when lo! they were plunged in despair!" (Al-An'am 44)

﴿ فَلَمَّا نَسُوا۟ مَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَٰبَ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَرِحُوا۟ بِمَآ أُوتُوٓا۟ أَخَذْنَٰهُم بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْلِسُونَ ﴾

(Ahmad, At-Tabarani and Al-Baihaqi).

It is narrated on the authority of Al-Hassan that one of the companions of the Prophet saw a woman which he knew from the Pre-Islamic days of ignorance. He talked with her and then left her and went away. But he turned his face towards her while walking until a wall struck him and injured his head. He came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and told him. The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "If Allah Almighty intends good for a servant, He would hasten on his punishment for his sin in this world." (Ahmad and At-Tabarani on the authority of Al-Hassan from Abdullah Ibn Ma'qil). Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Should I not tell you about the Holy Verse in the Qur'an which gives the greatest hope?" they answered in the affirmative, thereupon he recited to them: " Whatever misfortune happens to you, is because of the things your hands have wrought, and for many (of them) He grants forgiveness." (Ash-Shura 30)

﴿ وَمَآ أَصَٰبَكُم مِّن مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَن كَثِيرٍ ﴾

The misfortunes in this world ensue from committing sins. If Allah punishes the sinner in this world, He is too generous to punish him for it once again in the hereafter. If He excuses him in this world, He is too generous to

punish him for it on the Day of Judgement. It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "No servant takes two sips dearer to Allah than a sip of anger which he curbs with forbearance (for the Sake of Allah), and a sip of misfortune for which he keeps patient. No drop is shed dearer to Allah Almighty than a drop of blood to be shed in the Cause of Allah, or a drop of tear to be shed amidst the darkness of night while one is prostrating, and none is seeing him but Allah Almighty. No servant takes two steps dearer to Allah than a step to be taken to perform the obligatory prayer, and a step to keep good relation with his kith and kin." (Abu Bakr Ibn Lala, Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami and Ibn Majah).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: A child belonging to Solomon, son of David, "peace be upon them" died and he grieved for him so much. Two angels came to him in the form of two foes and knelt before him. One of them said: "I have sowed seed and when it yielded, this man came upon it and damaged it." Solomon asked the other about his opinion and he said: "It was on the main road." Solomon "peace be upon him" asked him: "Why have you then sowed the seed on the main road? Do you not know that this road is necessary for people?" he replied: "Then, why do you grieve for your child? Do you not know that death is the way to the hereafter?" On that Solomon repented to his Lord and grieved not for any child afterwards.

Once Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz entered upon one of his children and he was fatally ill. He said to him: "O my son! To be in my balance is dearer to me than I be in yours." He said: "O my father! What you like is dearer to me than what I like." It is narrated that once, the death news was announced to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" of one of his sons thereupon he said: "We all belong to Allah, and to Him we all shall return. It is a defect screened by Allah, a burden sufficed by Allah, and a reward given by Allah Almighty." Then he descended and offered a two-rak'ah prayer and said: "We have done what Allah commanded us to do. Allah Almighty said: " Nay, seek (Allah's) help with patient perseverance and prayer: it is indeed hard, except to those who bring a lowly spirit." (Al-Baqarah 45)

﴿ وَٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلْخَـٰشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ ﴾

In another context, the death news was announced to Ibn Al-Mubarak of one of his children. A Magian whom he recognized came to console him and said to him: "The rational should do today what an ignorant might do five days later." Ibn Al-Mubarak said: "Write this phrase from him." A religious scholar said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty puts a servant to trial from time to time until he walks on the earth as sinless." According to Al-Fudail: "Allah Almighty fosters His believing servant with trials in the same way as anyone of you fosters his family with good." According to Hatim Al-Asamm: "On the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty will support His argument on four classes of men with four persons: on the rich with Solomon "peace be upon him", on the poor with the Christ "peace be upon him", on the slaves with Joseph "peace be upon him", and on the patient with Job "peace be upon him"."

It is narrated that when Zechariah "peace be upon him" escaped from the disbelievers among the children of Israel and hid himself in the tree and they learnt his place of escape, they brought a saw and started to saw the tree until the saw touched his head thereupon he moaned. Allah Almighty revealed to him: "O Zechariah! Should you moan once again, I would erase your name from the list of Prophethood." On that Zechariah "peace be upon him" kept silent biting his finger until his body was cut into two halves. According to Abu Mas'ud Al-Balkhi: "Whoever is afflicted with a calamity and he tears his clothes or slaps his front, seems as if he takes a lance to fight his Lord Almighty." Luqman "peace be upon him" said: "O my son! The gold is tested with fire, and the righteous servant is tested with trial. If Allah likes a people, He puts them to trial: whoever is pleased attains the good pleasure (of Allah); and whoever is displeased incurs displeasure (of Allah upon himself)."

Al-Ahnaf Ibn Qais said: One night I had a tooth ache and in the morning I complained to my paternal uncle: "I have not slept because of the severe pain in my molar tooth until I removed it." He said to me: "You have talked much about the ache of your molar tooth only on one night. I lost my eye thirty years ago, and none among the people learnt about it." Allah Almighty revealed to Uzair "peace be upon him": "If you are afflicted with a trial, do not complain Me to anyone of My creatures, just as I do not complain you to anyone of My angels if your evil deeds and indignities are raised to Me." We ask Allah Almighty to screen us out of His great kindness and generosity.

Exposition Of Superiority Of Favor To Ordeal

You may say that these narrations give the impression that the trial is better in this world than the favor. So, should we ask Allah to endow us with trial instead of favor? In reply to that, let me say that there is no point to do so, for it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to seek refuge with Allah in his supplication from the trial of the world and the trial of the hereafter. (Ahmad on the authority of Bishr Ibn Abu Arta'ah). He and the other Prophets "peace be upon them" used to say: "O Lord! Give us a good deed in this world and a good deed in the hereafter." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas). They also used to seek refuge with Allah from the enemy's schadenfreude. When Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said in his supplication: "O Allah! I ask You for patience." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "You have asked for trial. But rather ask for wellbeing." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Mu'adh).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Ask Allah (to endow you with) wellbeing, for none is given better than wellbeing save certainty (of faith)." (Ibn Majah and An-Nasa'i). By certainty, he referred to the wellbeing of heart from the disease of ignorance and doubt. However, the wellbeing of the heart is higher than the wellbeing of the body. According to Al-Hassan: "The good in which there is no evil is the wellbeing that is mixed with gratitude. Indeed, many are the unthankful beneficiaries." According to Mutarrif Ibn Abdullah: "To be healthy and give gratitude is dearer to me than to be put to

trial and keep patient." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said in his supplication: "Your wellbeing is dearer to me." (Ibn Ishaq in his Sirah, and it is a part of his supplication therewith he supplicated Allah on the day he set out to Ta'if).

This is self-evident. Therefore, the trial is regarded a favor by two considerations: the first is that it is so in comparison with what is more severe and grievous than it whether in the world or in religion. The other pertains to the expected reward for it. So, we should ask Allah Almighty to perfect favor in the world, and avert the trial and hardship, and ask Him the reward in the hereafter for gratitude for His favor, for He is to give for gratitude what He gives not for patience.

You may argue that one of the righteous said: "Would that I be a bridge to be held over the fire on which all the people cross and are saved, and I remain in the fire." Is it not that such ask Allah for trial (other than favor)? In reply to that, it should be known to you that it is related that Samnun, who asked for trial, was tried with sexual impotence, after which he used to go round the elementary schools and say to the children: "Supplicate Allah to a good effect for your false uncle." Furthermore, it is impossible for a man to like to be in the fire of Hell sacrificing himself for all the people. But love might prevail over the heart until one thinks himself fitting for the like of that. Whoever drinks the cup of love would be intoxicated, and whoever is under the influence might extend in his speech. But once the state of intoxication is over from him, he would perceive that what he said was not real. Thus, these words belong to the speech of lovers which is pleasant to hear, but unreliable in fact.

It is narrated that the husband of Fakhitah used to induce her (to have sexual relation with her), and she used to prevent him. He said to her: "Why do you refrain from me given that if you like me to turn the entire universe including even the dominion of Solomon upside down, I would do for your sake?" when Solomon "peace be upon him" heard him, he invited him and blamed him for that. On that he said: "O Prophet of Allah! The lover's speech is unreliable." He indeed has told the truth. Some lovers have come to take pleasure in the trial so long as they feel they please Allah Almighty more than they do in wellbeing so long as they do not feel they please Allah Almighty. If His pleasure with them is in the trial, the trial would become dearer to them than wellbeing. This state is not unlikely once love prevails over the heart. But it is not constantly durable; and even if it is constantly durable, is it a healthy state? The verification of this matter is unfitting for this topic in issue. The point is that it seems from what we have mentioned that wellbeing is better than trial. So, we ask Allah to endow us with forgiveness and wellbeing in religion, world and hereafter.

Explication Of Which Is Better: Patience Or Gratitude

It should be known to you that this matter is debatable between people some of whom favor patience, and some gratitude, and others make them equal, and others differentiate between both according to the different states and conditions. Each group support their argument with words which are troubled and irrelevant.

So, to transmit their words is of no significance. It is rather better to initiate to show the truth saying:

In order to show this, there are two stations:

The first is the station of simplicity. It is to consider the outward side of the matter without delving into its truth. It is that with which the laymen should be addressed, for they fall short of perceiving the abstruse facts. It is this kind of speech that the preachers should adopt in their preachings, for the purpose of their speech is to reform the laymen. The suckling woman, for instance, should not foster the babe with the fat and fleshy birds or the edible kinds of sweet, but she should nourish him with no more than the good and fresh milk, and forbid the sweet food from him until he grows up enough and becomes able to eat and digest it well. This station requires to consider the apparent concept of the texts of Sharia, and it gives preference to patience over gratitude.

Although there are many narrations in favor of the excellence of gratitude, if they are to be compared with the narrations in favor of the excellence of patience, it seems that patience is more excellent. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The best things you have been given are certainty (of faith) and the determination of patience." According to another narration: "The most thankful among the inhabitants of the earth would be brought and rewarded by Allah Almighty with the reward of the thankful; and the most patient among the inhabitants of the earth would be brought and it would be said to him: "Would you be pleased to be rewarded like the reward We have given to that thankful?" he would say: "Yes O Lord!" Allah would say: "Nay! I have bestowed favor on him (the thankful) for which he gave thanks, whereas I tried you and you kept patient. I would multiply your reward for it." Then, he would be given many times the reward of the thankful." In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: "those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!" (Az-Zumar 10)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴾

As for the Prophet's statement: "The thankful eating is in the same position of the patient fasting" (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah) indicates to the excellence of patience. Gratitude here is mentioned by way of exaggeration in order to be raised up to the position of patience. Had it not been understood from Sharia that patience is higher in rank, raising up the gratitude to its rank would have not been an exaggeration to overestimate gratitude. It is like his statement: "The (performance of prayer on) Friday is the pilgrimage of the indigent, and the woman's' Jihad is her good companionship with her husband." (The first half of Al-Harith Ibn Usamah on the authority of Ibn Abbas; and the second half is narrated on the authority of At-Tabarani on the same authority). Or like his statement: "The drunk is like the idolater." To be sure, in simile, the compared with should be higher in rank than the compared. The statement that "Patience constitutes half the faith" does not indicate that gratitude is like it.

It is narrated that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "The last to enter Paradise among the Prophets would be Solomon, son of David "peace be upon

them" due to his great dominion (he had in the world); and the last to enter Paradise among my companions would be Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf due to his great richness (he enjoyed in this world)." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Mu'adh Ibn Jabal). According to another narration, "Solomon would enter Paradise forty years after all the Prophets." According to another narration, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "All gates of Paradise have two posts, except that of patience, which has only one post; and the first to enter through it would be the men of trial, led by Job "peace be upon him"."

All the narrations that support the good merits of poverty indicate to the excellence of patience, for patience is the state of the poor, whereas gratitude is the state of the rich. That is the station with which the laymen are satisfied. It is sufficient for them to receive the suitable preaching and definitions which contribute in the righteousness of their religion.

The other station is to let the men of knowledge and deep perception of facts and real nature of things know by way of revelation and disclosure. If there are two abstruse matters, the comparison between them is impossible unless the real nature of each is revealed. Each revealed thing is divided into many divisions and to compare between them in total is impossible unless each division is separated to be compared with its counterpart. It is only in this way that preponderance of anyone of them over the other seems evident. Patience and gratitude are of many divisions and branches. So, the preponderance or shortage of anyone of them in total is impossible to seem well.

We have already mentioned that the components of those stations are three: sciences, states and works. The same is true of gratitude and patience. When they are compared, from the first sight, it seems to the beholders of the outward sides, that sciences are intended for states, and states for works, and thus works are the best. But in the view of the masters of insights, the matter is different. According to them, works are intended for states, and states for sciences, which seem the best, followed by states and then by works.

As for each of those three individually, they are different and superior to each other. The best of knowledge, for example, are the sciences of Disclosure (Mukashafah), and they are superior to the sciences of practical religion (Mu'amalah). The sciences of practical religion themselves are inferior to practice itself, for those sciences are intended for practice, and their benefit is to set right the work. The scholar of the practical religion is superior to the worshipper in so much as the benefit of his knowledge is general and public. This differs from the knowledge which has no practical benefit. Let's say that the benefit of reforming practice is to reform the state of the heart; and the benefit of reforming the state of the heart is to have the Glory and Majesty of Allah Almighty in His essence, acts and attribute revealed to him.

The highest of the sciences of Mukashafah is to know Allah Almighty; and it is an end which is sought for itself, because therewith happiness is attained. Nay! It is the happiness itself. But the heart might not feel in this world but in the hereafter that it is the happiness itself. It is the unrestricted free knowledge, and

all the other kinds of knowledge are but restricted by, and servants to it, for they all are intended for it; and they co-operate in so much as they benefit in leading to that high knowledge. To be sure, the kinds of knowledge lead to each other directly or indirectly through intermediaries. The more the intermediaries between one and the knowledge of Allah Almighty is less, the better and higher it is.

As for the states, we intend the states of the heart in purification and disengagement from the stains and occupations of this world with its creatures. Once it is purified, the true nature of the Real becomes clear to it. The merits of states are determined by its effect on reforming and purifying the heart, and preparing it to be fit for receiving the sciences of Mukashafah. As well as the mirror needs, in order to be polished, many conditions some of which bring it nearer to polishing than others, the same is true of the heart in its accompanying states, some of which bring it nearer to purification and refinement than others. Of course, the more a state draws the heart to purification, the better and higher it is than others. Similarly, the order of acts is subject to the same rule in bringing different states on the heart. Each act either brings on it a state which hinders it from Mukashafah, darkens it and brings it to the adornment of this world; or brings on it a state which makes it fit for Mukashafah, purifies it and disconnects it from the ties of this world and its occupations.

Disobedience is the name of the former; and obedience of the latter. Sins are different in their traces on the darkness and harshness of the heart; as well as the acts of obedience are different in their impact on the illumination and purification of the heart. The difference indeed is determined by the difference of states. In illustration, let's say that the supererogatory prayer is better than any other supererogatory deed; Hajj is better than charity; and the standing at night (for supererogatory prayers) is better than many things other than it, and so forth. But with deeper verification, we could say that the rich who has wealth, and is possessed by miserliness and longing for property, to give in charity is better for him than to stand at night (for supererogatory prayer), and to observe many voluntary fasts, for fasting is better for him who is seized by the appetite of stomach, which he likes to break, or him who is hindered by satiety from pure meditation on sciences of Mukashafah, and he likes to purify his heart by way of hunger. Of a surety, the miserliness that is obeyed by the miser is among the destructives which could hardly be removed even by fasts of one hundred years, or standing for one thousand nights (for supererogatory prayers). Nothing removes it but to give out money. So, such has to give what he has in charity. The details of that are explained in the quarter of destructives. So, you should return to it.

It is by this consideration that the states are different; and at that point, the absolute answer is not possible. If one asks you about which is better, bread or water. No absolute answer would be possible for bread is better for the hungry, and water is better for the thirsty. If both hunger and thirst are combined, then, let one consider which of them is more prevalent. If thirst prevails hunger, then,

water would be better, and if hunger prevails thirst, then, bread would be better, and if they are equal, then, both would be equal. Similarly, if it is asked whether oxymel or lemonade is better, no answer would be possible. It is true that if it is said to us whether oxymel or absence of piles is better, we could answer that the absence of piles is much better, for oxymel is intended for it; and so on.

The point then is that to give in charity is to spend money, which leads to a particular state, i.e. the removal of niggardliness, and the disappearance of the love for this world from the heart. With the disappearance of the love for this world, the heart becomes fit for the knowledge of and love for Allah Almighty. This means that knowledge is the best, followed by state and then by work.

But you may argue that Sharia exhorted people to do deed which it overemphasized to the extent that He Almighty said in request for charity to be given (to the poor): "Who is he that will loan to Allah a beautiful loan, which Allah will double unto his credit and multiply many times? It is Allah that gives (you) Want or Plenty, and to Him shall be your return." (Al-Baqarah 245)

﴿ مَّن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يُقْرِضُ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَٰعِفَهُۥ لَهُۥٓ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْصُۜطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٤٥﴾ ﴾

And: "Know they not that Allah does accept repentance from His votaries and receives their gifts of charity, and that Allah is verily He, the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful?" (At-Tawbah 104)

﴿ أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَأْخُذُ ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾

By that consideration, why should deed represented in giving in charity not be the best?

In reply to that, it should be known to you that if a physician rates a medicine, it would not be an indication that it is intended for itself, or that it is better than health and cure that result from it. But deed is the remedy of the heart disease, which one rarely feels. It is like leprosy on the face of him who has no mirror to see his face in it. The only way to cause him to sense it is to acclaim exaggeratingly the wash of the face with pure and fresh hailstone if hailstone is to remove leprosy, which exhorts him to wash his face regularly with hailstone until his ailment is removed. Were he to be asked to do so with the intention to remove his ailment, he might abandon it under pretext that his face is faultless.

Let's give another illustrative example. If one teaches his child knowledge and Qur'an and likes to have this constantly permanent in his memory, and he knows that were he to command him to repeat what he learns so much in order to keep it in memory, the child would not do it under pretext that it is kept in his memory and there is no need for repetition, thinking that what he keeps in memory at the moment remains unchangeable across the time. At the same time, if this father has slaves, and he commands his child to teach them from what he has learnt, with the promise to be rewarded for that, and of course, whilst teaching them, he would repeat what he has learnt so many times, in which case, the poor child would think that the purpose is to teach Qur'an to the slaves, for which he is

used. Perhaps this might lead him to say to himself: "What is the matter with me that I have been used to teach the slaves given that I am higher in rank and dearer than them in the sight of my father?" he also might think that teaching those slaves might not avail the father himself, which leads him to indulge in teaching them. The result is that he would forget knowledge and become deprived of its benefit, by way of a false deception and imagination.

Some of the straying people have been deceived by that method, under pretext that Allah is not in need of their worship or to ask them for loan, wondering about the significance of His statement: "Who is he that will loan to Allah a beautiful loan, which Allah will double unto his credit and multiply many times?" (Al-Baqarah 245)

﴿ مَّن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يُقْرِضُ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَـٰعِفَهُۥ لَهُۥٓ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً ﴾

They said: "had Allah willed to feed the indigent, He would have provided them with food. Thus, there is no need for us to spend our wealth on them." Allah says about some of them: " And when they are told, "Spend you of (the bounties) with which Allah has provided you," The Unbelievers say to those who believe: "Shall we then feed those whom, if Allah had so willed, He would have fed, (Himself)? You are in nothing but manifest error." (Ya Sin 47)

﴿ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنُطْعِمُ مَن لَّوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُۥٓ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَـٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴾

They also said (as told by Allah): " Those who give partners (to Allah) will say: "If Allah had wished, we should not have given partners to Him, nor would our fathers: nor should we have had any taboos."" (Al-An'am 148)

﴿ سَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَآ أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمْنَا مِن شَىْءٍ ﴾

Consider then how they had told the truth, and how they had been given to destruction because of their truthfulness.

Glory be to Allah Who destroys with truthfulness if He so likes, and makes happy with ignorance if He so likes. He guides many and leaves many to stray. When they thought they had been served for the benefit of the poor and indigent, they rejected it and said: "We have no portion in the indigent, and Allah has no portion in us nor in our property, and it is the same whether we spend or withhold." In this way they were given to destruction as was the child when he thought that his father's purpose was the service of the slaves, and did not sense that his real purpose was to make firm knowledge in his heart in order to be a cause of his happiness in the world and the hereafter. This example shows to you how those who were destroyed had been ruined through that way. The one who takes your wealth indeed extracts the impurity of destructive niggardliness and love for this world from inside your body, like the cupper who takes out the corrupt blood and with it the destructive ailment from inside your body. The cupper then is a servant of you and not you of him; and he has nothing to do with the blood he takes out of your body. Since the charity was to purify the inside of bodies from the malicious and wicked attributes, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" abstained from taking it. He also forbade his kinship to take it and likened it to

the impurities of people.

The point is that deeds affect the heart and according to their effect, the heart is apt to receive guidance and light of knowledge. That is the universal rule to be known about the merits of deeds, states and knowledge. Now, let's return to our main topic about patience and gratitude. Each of them has a knowledge, a state and a deed. The knowledge, for example of any of them could not be met with the deed or state of the other. Each should be met with its counterpart in order for the relevance to seem clear; and after relevance, the superiority might be distinguished. It may be that if the knowledge of the thankful is met with the knowledge of the patient, both would refer to the same source. The knowledge of the thankful is to see the favor of his sight from Allah Almighty; and the patient's knowledge is to see his blindness from Allah Almighty; and both are equal.

We have already shown that patience might be on doing the act of worship as well as on abstention from sin. In them, both patience and gratitude are combined. The patience on doing an act of worship is to be thankful for it. That is because gratitude refers to using the favor of Allah Almighty in that for which it is created with wisdom; and patience refers to the firmness of religious motive versus the motive of inclination and desire. Both patience and gratitude are two names for the same thing by two different considerations. Firmness of religious motive versus the motive of inclination and desire is called patience in relation with the motive of inclination and gratitude in relation with the religious motive. The religious motive is created for that wisdom, i.e. to overpower the motive of inclination; and having done so, it will have been used for the wisdom for which it is created. Both then denote the same thing. How then should a thing be regarded superior to itself?

Patience then works in three things: obedience, disobedience and affliction. Its wisdom concerning obedience and disobedience has been shown clearly. As far as affliction is concerned, it is to lose a favor. The favor might be necessary like eyes, or unnecessary like the extra wealth that is beyond the need.

As regards what is necessary like eyes, the blind's patience on them is not to complain, and rather to be satisfied with the fate and ordainment of Allah Almighty, and not to indulge, because of them, in sins. The gratitude of the sighted for them is to do two things: the first is not to use them in disobedience of Allah Almighty, and the other is to use them in obedience of Allah Almighty. Each of both could hardly be free from patience. The blind is sufficed patience on the beautiful (unlawful) scenes for he does not see them. If the eye of the sighted falls on a beautiful scene on which he keeps patient, he would be thankful for the favor of both eyes; and if he follows his sight, he would be ungrateful of the favor of both eyes. In this way, patience becomes a part of his gratitude. Likewise, if he utilizes his eyes in obedience, he would be patient on obedience.

But even, he might appreciate (the favor of his eyes) by utilizing them in looking at the wonders of the making of Allah Almighty to reach therewith the knowledge of Allah Almighty; and in this case, gratitude is better than patience. Had it not been for that, Shu'aib "peace be upon him" who was blind from

among the Prophets would have been higher in rank than Moses "peace be upon him". That is because he kept patient on the loss of sight versus Moses who did not keep patient. Had it not been for that too, it would have been out of perfection for man to lose the favor of all of his limbs and organs and be left as only bones covered with flesh. But this is debatable for every organ and part of body is an instrument for religion, and by losing it, one corner of religion is missed. To Appreciate it is to utilize it for the very thing of religion for which it is created. This is achieved only by patience.

As for what is unnecessary, like what is beyond the need of wealth, if he is given only what suffices for the minimum requirements of living and he needs more, to keep patient on it is out of mortification, i.e. the mortification of poverty. Of a surety, the additional wealth is a favor, but to appreciate it is not to use it in disobedience of Allah, or to utilize it only in what is good. If patience is compared with gratitude which is to utilize it in obedience, gratitude becomes better, for it implies patience, pleasure with the favor of Allah Almighty, the probable pain of utilizing it on the poor instead of using it in permissible enjoyment. But if appreciating it is not to use it in disobedience, and rather to utilize it in permissible enjoyment, in this case, patience becomes better.

However, the patient poor is better than the rich who withholds his wealth and spends it on the permissible enjoyment and pleasures, and not the rich who spends his wealth on what is good. That is because the poor strives himself and breaks its desires, and is well-pleased with the trial to which he is put by Allah Almighty; and this state summons power. But the rich follows his desires and appetence, but is restricted to what is permissible. The permissible is better than the unlawful. Although power here is necessary to enable him to be patient on what is unlawful, the power therewith the poor keeps patient is higher and stronger than that therewith the rich keeps patient on limiting himself to what is permissible apart from what is unlawful.

All narrations and Holy Verses in which the reward of patience is preferred to the reward of gratitude are intended for that rank in particular. That is because what occurs to the mind from the first sight concerning the favor is wealth; and what occurs to the mind concerning gratitude for richness from the first sight is only to say 'Praise be to Allah', and not to spend his money in disobedience. But it does not occur to mind to spend it in obedience. In this meaning, patience which is understood by the laymen is better than gratitude that is understood by the laymen. To that meaning Al-Junaid referred when he was asked about patience and gratitude: which of them is better. On that he said: "The rich is not praised for he has, nor is the poor for he has not. Both are praised when they undertake the conditions required each for his state. The condition of the rich requires many things to befit his attribute, in terms of enjoyment and delights; and the condition of the poor requires many things to befit his attribute in terms of grief and disturbance. If both have the conditions required each for his state, and do not disobey Allah Almighty, no doubt, the one whose attribute is pained and disturbed is more perfect than him who enjoys and pleases his attribute."

Indeed, what he said is true as regards the third division of both patience and gratitude. It is said that Abu Al-Abbas Ibn Ata' disagreed with him when he claimed that the thankful rich is better than the patient poor, thereupon Al-Junaid invoked evil upon him and he was afflicted with the murder of his children, damage of his wealth and loss of his mind for fourteen years during which he used to say: "The invocation of Al-Junaid has affected me." He then detracted from his opinion and came to favor the patient poor over the thankful rich.

If you observe what we have said, you would know that each of both opinions has its acceptance in many cases. It may be that a patient poor is better than a thankful rich as we have already mentioned; and in some cases, it may be that a thankful rich is better than a patient poor. I mean the rich who sees himself like the poor in so far as he withholds nothing of his wealth for himself more than what suffices his necessary needs and spends all his wealth on the good things, or keeps it in service of the needy and indigent. And even if he spends his wealth, he does not do so to seek majesty or authority, but rather to fulfill the right of Allah Almighty in His servants. This thankful rich is better than the patient poor.

You may argue: "The rich does not feel it difficult on himself, whereas the poor feels poverty difficult on himself, for the former feels the pleasure of capacity and power, whereas the latter feels the pain of patience. But if the rich feels pain because of losing money, it is removed by the pleasure of the ability to spend." In reply to that, it should be known to you that whoever spends his wealth with good pleasure and gladness is higher and more perfect in rank than the niggard who spends his wealth with oppression and against his will. The pain is not required for itself in so much as to discipline oneself. If pain and mortification are needed in the beginning (of following the path), they are not needed in the end for in the end what was painful turns to be pleasant.

Absolutely speaking, patience is better than gratitude. But patience is of many degrees, the lowest of which is not to complain, followed by the good pleasure, followed by thankfulness for affliction. Similarly, gratitude is of several degrees and we have mentioned the highest of them. To feel shy of Allah's consecutive favors on a servant is gratitude. One's knowledge of his falling short of thankfulness is gratitude. To apologize for one's lack of thankfulness is gratitude. His knowledge of the great forbearance and screening of Allah is gratitude. The acknowledgement that favors are given by Allah Almighty to servants regardless of their being not worthy of them is gratitude. The knowledge that thankful itself is one of the favors of Allah Almighty is gratitude. One's good humbleness before favors is also gratitude. To thank the means (of favors) is gratitude, since the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever does not thank the people has not thanked Allah." Abstention from objection and adherence to good politeness before the benefactor are gratitude. To receive the favor of Allah with good acceptance is gratitude.

The point is that both patience and gratitude are of infinite states and deeds with which we could not favor each over the other in general.

Book three: Fear and Hope

It is the third book of the quarter of saviors

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah whose loving kindness and reward are hoped for, whose stratagems and punishment are feared; who keeps alive the hearts of His allies with the breath of hope in Him, so that He may urge them on with the kindnesses of His benefits to alight in His courtyard and to swerve from His house of tribulation which is the abode of His enemies. And with the lashes of threatening and His harsh upbraiding He has driven the faces of those who shun His presence towards the house of His reward and preferment; and he has blocked them from thwarting His leaders and becoming the butt of His wrath and vengeance by leading the different types of His creatures with chains of violence and coercion, and reins of compassion and graciousness, to His Garden. And the blessing be on Muhammad, Master of His prophets and the most elect of his vicegerents, and on his family and Companions and relations.

To proceed. Hope and fear are two wings by means of which those who are brought near fly to every commendable station, and two mounts on which every steep ascent of the paths of the next world is traversed. And nothing but the reins of hope will lead to the vicinity of the Merciful and the joy of the Gardens the man who is distant from hoping and heavy with burdens, who is encompassed with what the heart abhors and with toils of members and limbs. And nothing shall avert from the fire of Hell and the painful punishment the man who is encompassed with the blandishments of lusts and the marvels of pleasures except the scourges of threatening and the assaults of violence. Consequently there is nothing for it but an exposition of the essence and merits of them both, as well as the way of arriving at a junction between the two of them, in spite of their polarity and mutual antipathy.

We join the mention of them in a single book which is comprised of two parts, the first part concerning hope and the second part fear.

PART ONE: HOPE

As for the first part, it includes three chapters:

Exposition of essence of hope

Exposition of merit of hope

Exposition of remedy of hope and way in which hope is obtained by it

Let us ask Allah for good success.

CHAPTER ONE: EXPOSITION OF ESSENCE OF HOPE

It should be known that hope is among the sum of the stations of the pilgrims and the states of the seekers. And the description *station* is given only when it is permanent and endures, and *state* only when transitoriness is hinted at. Just as yellow is divided into *permanent* such as the yellow of gold; *transitory* such as the yellow of fear; and what comes between these two like the yellow of a sick

person. Similarly the attributes of the heart follow these divisions and whatever is not permanent is called a state, because it soon changes, and this is continually happening in any description of the heart.

We are dealing at present with the essence of hope. Hope also comprises state, knowledge and deed. Knowledge is the cause which produces the state and the state decrees the deed. Hope is the comprehensive name of the three. Its exposition is that everything that confronts you is either what is abhorred or what is desired, and is divided into what is existent at the moment, what has existed in the past, and what is expected in the future. When what has existed in the past occurs to your mind, it is called remembering and recollecting; if what occurs to your mind is existent at the moment, it is called finding and tasting and perceiving. It is called finding because it is a state which you find for yourself. And, if the existence of something in the future occurs to your mind and prevails over your heart, it is called expectation and anticipation. If the thing expected is abhorred, with pain in the heart resulting from it, it is called fear and distress. If it is something desired, with pleasure and relief of heart resulting from the expectation of it and the attachment of the heart to it and the occurrence of its existence to your mind, that relief is hope.

Hence hope is the relief of the heart, because of the expectation of what it esteems desirable. But the desirable thing which is anticipated must have a cause, so, if the expectation of it is on account of the obtaining of the majority of the means to it, the name of hope in relation to it is justified. If that expectation is in spite of the defectiveness of the means to it and their disorder, the name of self-deceit and stupidity is more justified in relation to the expectation than that of hope. If the means are not specified either as existent or in mutual contradiction, the name of wishful thinking is more justified in relation to the expectation of it, because it is an expectation which is devoid of a cause. And, in any circumstance, the name of hope and fear does not apply to what is determined. For one does not say: I hope for the rising of the sun at the time of sunrise and I fear its setting at the time of sunset, because that is determined. But one does say: I hope that the rain will fall and I fear lest it should be cut off.

And the Spiritual Directors teach that this present world is the field of the next world, and the heart is as the earth, and faith is as the seed in it, and obedience is conducive to the turning over of the earth and the cleansing of it and the digging of channels and the leading of waters to them; and the heart which is infatuated with this present world and submerged in it is like swampy ground in which the seed does not fructify. And the Day of Resurrection is the day of reaping, and no one reaps except what he has sown, and only he who has sown the seed of faith grows crops. Rarely is faith profitable in company with a vicious heart whose moral traits are tainted just as seed does not fructify in swampy soil. And it is fitting that the hope of the creature for pardon should equal the hope of the owner of the crops.

For everyone who seeks good ground and casts into it seed of first quality which is neither moldy nor worm-eaten, who thereafter furnishes it with what is necessary to it, that is, the conducting of water to it at appropriate times; who

then clears the ground of thorns and weeds and everything that obstructs the growth of the seed or makes it rot; who then sits down and expects from the bounty of Allah the warding off of thunderbolts and blights, until his crop is mature and he arrives at his goal-his expectation is called hope. And, if he scatters his seed in ground which is baked hard or swampy, which is so elevated that the water does not flow into it, and does not labour one whit in the preparation of the seed-if he then expects a harvest from it, his expectation is called stupidity and self-deceit, not hope. And, if he scatters seed in ground which is good but without water, and proceeds to wait for the waters of the rains where they neither prevail nor are cut off, his expectation is called wishful thinking and not hope. Therefore the name of hope is legitimate only in relation to the expectation of a thing desired, all of whose means, which come within the choice of the creature, have been facilitated, and only what does not come within his choice remains, and this is the bounty of Allah in repelling birds and blights.

So when the creature sows the seed of faith and irrigates it with the water of obedience and cleanses the heart from the thorns of vicious moral traits and expects from the bounty of Allah his being established in that course until death and the virtue of the Seal that gives access to pardon, such expectation as his is hope in its essence, commendable in itself, and giving him an incentive for perseverance and endurance, in accordance with the means of faith, in perfecting the means of pardon until death. If its preparation with the water of obedience is cut off from the seed of faith, or, if the heart is remiss, filled with moral delinquencies, and obstinately persists in seeking the pleasures of this world, and then expects pardon, its expectation is stupidity and self-deceit. He (Muhammad) said: The fool is he whose soul follows its passions and who desires of Allah the Garden. And He (Allah) said: " But after them there followed a posterity who missed prayers and followed after lusts: soon, then will they face Destruction." (Maryam 59)

﴿ ۞ فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٌ أَضَاعُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَلۡقَوۡنَ غَيًّا ﴿٥٩﴾ ﴾

And He said: " After them succeeded an (evil) generation: they inherited the Book, but they chose (for themselves) the vanities of this world, saying (for excuse): "(Everything) will be forgiven us."" (Al-A'raf 169)

﴿ فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٞ وَرِثُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ يَأۡخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَٰذَا ٱلۡأَدۡنَىٰ وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغۡفَرُ لَنَا ﴿١٦٩﴾ ﴾

And Allah condemned the owner of the garden, when he entered his garden and said: "I deem not that this will ever perish, "Nor do I deem that the Hour (of Judgment) will (ever) come: even if I am brought back to my Lord, I shall surely find (there) something better in exchange." (Al-Kahf 35-36)

﴿ وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُۥ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٞ لِّنَفۡسِهِۦ قَالَ مَآ أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أَبَدٗا ﴿٣٥﴾ وَمَآ أَظُنُّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةٗ
وَلَئِن رُّدِدتُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيۡرٗا مِّنۡهَا مُنقَلَبٗا ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

Therefore, " To those who believe and do deeds of righteousness has Allah promised forgiveness and a great reward." (Al-Ma'idah 9)

﴿ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

And blessing achieves completion only by the entering into the Garden. As for the disobedient person, when he has repented and repaired all that was remiss through shortcoming, it is proper that he should hope to receive repentance. With regard to the reception of repentance, when he has come to abhor disobedience, when sin grieves him and virtue delights him, when he blames himself and reproves it (evil) and desires repentance and yearns after it, it is proper that he should hope from Allah the advancement towards repentance because of his repugnance for disobedience; and his zeal for repentance is conducive to the cause which may give access to repentance.

And hope is only present after the consolidating of the means and for that reason He said: " Those who believed and those who suffered exile and fought (and strove and struggled) in the path of Allah, they have the hope of the Mercy of Allah: and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Al-Baqarah 218)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢١٨﴾ ﴾

The meaning is that these have a right to hope for the mercy of Allah. He did not intend by it that the existence of hope is exclusive to them, since others also may hope, but he has made exclusive to them the right to hope. As for him who obstinately perseveres in what Allah abhors, and does not upbraid himself because of it, and does not resolve on repentance and return, his hope of pardon is stupidity, like the hope of the person who has sown seed in swampy ground and made up his mind not to cultivate it by leading water to it and cleansing it of weeds.

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: The person who magnifies self-deceit is, in my opinion, the one who prolongs his sins, while he hopes for pardon without repentance and expects to draw near to Allah without obedience, and expects the crops of the Garden with the seed of the Fire, and seeks after the dwelling-place of obedience with the deeds of disobedience, and expects the reward without the deed, and has wishful thoughts of Allah in company with remissness.

You hope for salvation and you have not trodden its paths,
But the ship does not progress on dry land.

Since you are acquainted with the essence of hope and its marks, you know that it is a state which knowledge has produced through the setting in motion of the majority of the means, and this state produces zeal to persevere in the remainder of the means in accordance with what is possible. For the man whose seed is fine and whose land is good and who has abundance of water is entitled to his hope, and his legitimate hope will continually urge him towards the oversight of the ground and the cultivation of it and the clearing of all the weeds which grow on it. Thus he will not be remiss in any detail of its cultivation until the time of harvest. This is because hope sets him at the opposite pole from despair, and despair inhibits cultivation. For whoever 'knows' that the ground is swampy and

that the water will not flow and the seed will not grow, will, doubtless, as a consequence, neglect the oversight of the land and toil in its cultivation.

Hope is a commendable thing, because it is a source of incentive, and despair is reprehensible and is the antithesis of hope, because it distracts from work. Fear is not the antithesis of hope, rather it is a companion to it, as its exposition will bring out. More, it is another source of incentive, impelling along the path of awe just as hope impels along the path of inclination. Hence the state of hope produces sustained spiritual combat through actions, and perseverance in obedience, however fickle circumstances may be. Among its effects are finding pleasure in unbroken acceptance with Allah, contentment in private prayer with Him and fondness for deferring to Him. For these states must be manifest to everyone who hopes, whether king or commoner, and so how will that not be manifest to Allah? If it is not manifest, that will be a pointer to preclusion from the station of hope and descent into the pit of self-delusion and wishful thinking.

This then is the exposition of the state of hope and how knowledge produces it and how action is produced from it. And a tradition of Zaid Al-Khair is a pointer to its producing these actions; when he said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": I have come to enquire of you about Allah's way of identifying the person who aspires and the person who does not aspire. So he (Muhammad) said: How do you go about it? He said: I have made a practice of loving virtue and its people, and, whenever I have the capacity for anything belonging to it, I make haste towards it and I believe firmly in its reward. And, when anything belonging to it eludes me, I am grieved thereby and yearn after it. So he said: This is Allah's identification mark in respect of the one who aspires, and, if He had desired you for other things, He would have prepared you for them; then He would not be concerned in which of their wishes you perished. So he (Muhammad) has mentioned an identification mark of the person by whom virtue is sought, and, consequently, whoever hopes that there may be the intention of virtue without this mark is self-deluded.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPOSITION OF MERIT OF HOPE AND INCLINATION TOWARDS IT

It should be known that action on account of hope is of a higher order than action on account of fear, because the creatures who are nearest to Allah are those who love Him most, and love dominates hope. This is expressed by two kings, one of whom is served through fear of his punishment and the other through hope of his reward. For this reason what is desiderated, especially at the time of death, has to do with hope and optimism. He (Allah) said: " Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: For Allah forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Az-Zumar 53)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغۡفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلۡغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴾

Thus He proscribed the root of despair. And (it is recorded) in the traditions about Jacob that Allah revealed to him saying: Do you know why I parted Joseph from you ? It was because you said: I am afraid that the wolf will eat him, while

you are neglectful of him. Why did you fear the wolf and not hope in me ? And why did you have regard to the negligence of his brothers and did not have regard to my preserving him ?

And he (Muhammad) said: Truly, not one of you will die, except he has good expectations of Allah. And he said: Allah says: I am in accord with what my creature supposes of me, so let him suppose of me what he will. And he came into the presence of a man who was at the point of death and said: How do you find yourself ? So he said: I find that I am fearing my sins and hoping for the mercy of my Lord. So he (Muhammad) said: These two were not united in the heart of a creature in this homeland, but Allah granted him what he hoped and made him secure from what he feared. And `Ali said to a man whom fear had brought to despair because of his sins: O you, your despairing of the mercy of Allah is a greater fault than your sins.

Sufyan said: Whoever commits a sin and knows that Allah has assigned it against him, and (yet) hopes for His pardon, Allah will pardon him his sin. He continued: For Allah upbraided a group of people saying: "But this thought of yours which you did entertain concerning your Lord, has brought you to destruction, and (now) have you become of those utterly lost!" (Fussilat 23)

﴿ وَذَٰلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَىٰكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

And He said: "this seemed pleasing in your hearts, and you conceived an evil thought, for you are a people lost (in wickedness)." (Al-Fath 12)

﴿ وَزُيِّنَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنتُمْ ظَنَّ ٱلسَّوْءِ وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًۢا بُورًا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

And he (Muhammad) said: Truly Allah will say to His creature on the Day of Resurrection: What obstructed you from loathing the hated thing, when you saw it ? So, if Allah has given him a grasp of his defence, he will say: O Lord, I hoped in You and I feared the people. He (Muhammad) said: So, Allah will say: I have forgiven you it.

1- According to a sound tradition there was a man who was lending money to the people, and he was magnanimous to the rich and overlooked the debts of the destitute, and he met Allah and had not wrought a single good deed. Allah said: Who has a better right to that than we have? So He pardoned him because of his optimism and his hope that He would pardon him despite his being destitute of obedience. And He said: " Those who rehearse the Book of Allah, establish regular Prayer, and spend (in Charity) out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a Commerce that will never fail:

For He will pay them their meed, nay, He will give them (even) more out of His Bounty; for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (service)." (Fatir 29-30)

﴿ لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

And, when he (Muhammad) said: If you knew what I know, then you would laugh but little and would weep much, and would go out to the hills beating your breasts and making entreaty to your Lord. Gabriel swooped down and said: Truly

your Lord says to you: Why do you induce despair in My creatures, so that their hope and longing rebel against them?

And according to the tradition Allah revealed to David: Love Me and love whoever loves Me and commends Me to My creatures. So he said: O Lord, how do I commend You to Your creatures? So He said: Mention Me for My gracious goodness and commemorate My bounties and well-doing and their recollection of that, for they know Me only as One who is gracious.

And Aban Ibn Abu Ayyash had a vision in his sleep (he was in the habit of recollecting again and again the categories of hope) and he said: Allah halted me in front of Him and said: What is it that has spurred you on to this habit ? So I said: I desired to commend You to Your creatures. So He said: I have pardoned you. And Yahya Ibn Aktham was seen in a vision after his death and it was said to him: How did Allah deal with you? So he said: He halted me in front of Him and said: O Shaykh, you have repeatedly committed evil. He continued: Then trembling took hold of me with respect to what Allah might know. Then I said: O Lord, this is not the report I had of You. So He said: And what was reported to you about Me? So I said: `Abd Ar-Razzaq related to me from Ma'mar, from Az-Zuhri , from Anas, from Your Prophet, from Gabriel, that You said: I am in accord with what my creature supposes about Me, so let him suppose about Me what he will. So I supposed of You that You would not punish me. Allah said: Gabriel has spoken the truth, likewise My Prophet and Anas and Az-Zuhri and Ma'mar and `Abd Ar-Razzaq and yourself. He continued: And I was fitted out with clothes and the two attendants walked before me to the Garden and I exclaimed: What joy!

And in the tradition: There was a man of the children of Israel who was inducing despair in men and was being hard on them. So Allah said to him: The Day of Resurrection will be a day on which I will make you despair of My mercy as you have made My creatures despair of it. And he (Muhammad) said: Truly a man enters the Fire and remains in it one thousand years, calling out: O Gracious One, O Bounteous One. Then Allah will say to Gabriel: Go and bring my creature to me. He continued: So he brings him and halts him beside his Lord, and Allah says: How did you find your place? So he says: An evil place. So He says: Take him back to his place. So he walks off and turns round and Allah says: Why are you turning round? So he says: I had certainly hoped that You would not return me to it, after You had brought me out from it. So Allah says: Take him to the Garden. And this pointed to his hope being the cause of his salvation. Let us ask for the boon of success through His kindness and favour.

CHAPTER 3

EXPOSITION OF REMEDY OF HOPE AND THE WAY IN WHICH THE STATE OF HOPE IS OBTAINED FROM IT AND BECOMES DOMINANT

It should be known that two types of men have need of this therapy; either the man over whom despair has become dominant, so that he has neglected worship; or the man over whom fear has become dominant, and who has been extravagant in his perseverance in worship, so that he has done injury to himself

and his family. And these two examples of men incline away from the equilibrium towards the two extremes of neglect and excess, and so they have need of the treatment which will restore them to the equilibrium.

For the person who is disobedient and self-deceived, who has wishful thoughts of Allah in company with his evasion of worship and his blind plunging into deeds of disobedience-the therapeutic properties of hope are, in his case, turned into lethal poisons, just as is the case with honey which is a cure for the person who is overcome by cold and a lethal poison to the person who is overcome by heat. More, in the case of the self-deluded person, only the therapeutic properties of fear can be employed and the means which excite it, and, for that reason, it is necessary that there should be one to preach to the people; one benevolently disposed who observes the incidence of diseases and treats every disease with its antidote and not with what it has excess of. For what is sought after is the equilibrium, and the goal with respect to all attributes and moral traits, and the optimum state of affairs, is their mean. And, when the mean transgresses upon one of the two extremes, it is treated with what returns it to the mean, not with what would increase its tendency away from the mean.

And the present time is one in which it is not expedient that the means of hope should be employed with the most of men. Yet an exaggerated employment of threatening, no less, will hardly return them to the highway of truth and the beaten tracks of rectitude. As for the mention of the means of hope it would cause them to perish and would destroy them totally. But when they (i.e. the means of hope) are less burdensome to the heart and more pleasurable to the appetites, the goal of preaching is no more than to sway hearts (sc. to hope) and make people speak in eulogies, whatever be the reason for their inclining to hope, so that the corrupt increase in corruption and the stubborn in their rebellion through procrastination.

Ali said: The knowledgeable person is simply he who does not make people despair of the mercy of Allah and does not make them feel secure from the stratagems of Allah.

And we make mention of the means of hope in order that they may be employed in the case of the despairing man or the one who has been overcome by fear, according to the pattern of the Book of Allah and the Practice of His Messenger. For both embrace hope and fear in union, since these two unite the means of healing with respect to different kinds of sick people, in order that the Knowledgeable , who are the heirs of the prophets, may employ one or other of them according to need, just as the discriminating physician would employ them and not the quack who supposes that everything that has therapeutic value will be salutary to every sick person, whatever may be his condition.

The state of hope becomes dominant by means of two things; the one is reflection, and the other the reciting of the verses (i.e. of the Qur'an) and traditions and reports· With respect to reflection man reflects on all that we have mentioned concerning the different kinds of benefits in *The Book of Gratitude* , until he knows the kindnesses of the blessings of Allah to His creatures in this

world, and the marvels of His wisdom which He has disposed in the constitution of man, so that He has furnished for him in this world all that is necessary to him for the maintenance of existence. For example, the means of sustenance and what is needful to him, such as fingers and nails, and what is adornment to him, such as the arching of the eye-brows and the variegation of the colours of the eyes, and the redness of the lips, and other such things by the loss of which the goal aimed at would not be impaired. Only he would miss thereby the attainment of beauty. Since the Divine Providence has not left His creatures deficient in the instances of these minutiae, so that He was not content for His creatures that accessories and refinements in respect of adornment and necessity should pass them by, how will He take pleasure in driving them to everlasting destruction?

Moreover, when He ran over mankind with the eye of a physician, He knew that the most of men have at their disposal the means of happiness in this world, so that they dislike the translation from this world through death. Even if it were reported that there was never a single instance of a person being chastised after death or that there was no gathering (for Judgement), their distaste would not be non-existent, unless, doubtless, because the means of grace were predominant. The person who wishes for death is simply a rarity, and then he does not wish for it except in a rare circumstance, and an unexpected and unfamiliar contingency. Since the condition of the most of people in this world is one in which well-being and security prevail, the Practice of Allah does not find a substitute for them. The probability is that the affair of the next world is likewise, for the Framer of this world and the next is One, and He is forgiving, merciful and kind to His creatures, having compassion on them. So, when due reflection is given to this, the means of hope are strengthened thereby.

And also included in reflection is the scrutiny of the wisdom of the Law and its Practice in respect of this-worldly benefits, and the aspect of mercy to the creatures which is in it, so that one of the Gnostics used to consider the verse on incurring a debt in the Surah of Al-Baqarah as among the most powerful of the means of hope. So it was said to him (i.e. to the Gnostic). And what is there of hope in it ? So he said: This present world in its entirety is small, and the provision for mankind from it is small, and religion is small separated from His provision. And perceive how Allah revealed concerning it the longest verse, that He might guide His creature in the way of being encompassed in the keeping of his religion. And how will his religion not keep him who will not give anything in exchange for it ?

The second kind is the reciting of the verses and the traditions, and the material which has to do with hope is beyond definition. With regard to the verses, He said: " Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Az-Zumar 53).

﴿ ۞ قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا۟ مِن رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾ ﴾

And according to the recitation of the Messenger of Allah: "Then do not fret,

surely He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate." And He said: "And the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord, and ask pardon for those upon the earth." (As-Shura 5)

﴿ تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِن فَوْقِهِنَّ ۚ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ﴾

And He has recorded that He has prepared the Fire for His enemies and has simply frightened His friends with it. So He said to them: "Above them are overshadowings from the Fire and below them are overshadowings"; by means of that Allah threatens His servants. (Az-Zumar 16)

﴿ لَهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَمِن تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ عِبَادَهُۥ ﴾

And He said: "And fear the Fire prepared for the unbelievers." (Al Imran 131)

﴿ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

And He said: "Therefore do I warn you of a Fire blazing fiercely; None shall reach it but those most unfortunate ones Who give the lie to Truth and turn their backs." (Al-Lail 14-16)

﴿ فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ لَا يَصْلَىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْأَشْقَى ﴿١٥﴾ ٱلَّذِى كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴾

He said: "Surely your Lord is forgiving to the people in spite of their wrongdoing." (Ar-Ra'd 6)

﴿ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ لِّلنَّاسِ عَلَىٰ ظُلْمِهِمْ ﴾

Someone said: Truly the Prophet was making petition without ceasing for his people, so that it was said to him: Are you not satisfied, although this verse has been revealed to you: Surely your Lord is forgiving to the people in spite of their wrongdoing? And in comment on His saying: "Surely your Lord will bestow upon you and you will be satisfied", (Ad-Duha 5)

﴿ وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰٓ ﴾

He (the narrator) said: Muhammad will not rest content, while one of his people is in the Fire.

Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Ali used to say: You people of Iraq are saying: I hope in the verse in the Book of Allah, namely His saying: Say: O my creatures who have been profligate against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah to the end of the verse. And we, the people of the house say: I hope in the verse in the Book of Allah, namely His saying: Surely your Lord will bestow upon you and you will be satisfied.

Coming to the traditions, Abu Musa has related on the authority of the prophet "peace be upon him" that he said: My people are a people to whom mercy has been shown; they will not suffer chastisement in the next world; Allah has brought forward their chastisement to this world, earthquakes and factions. And, when the resurrection comes round, He will toss to every man of my people a man of the People of the Book and it will be said: This is your ransom from the Fire. And, in another version: Every man of this people will bring to Hell a Jew

or Christian, and he (the Muslim) will say: This is my ransom from the Fire, and he (the ransom) will be cast into it. And he (Muhammad) said: Heat is from the expanse of Hell and it is an amenity to the believer from the Fire. And it is reported in comment on His saying: "On the day when Allah will not degrade the prophet and those who believe with him", (At-Tahrim 8)

﴿ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِى ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِىَّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ ﴾

That Allah revealed to His Prophet: Truly, I am assigning the adjudication of your people to you. He said: No, my Lord, you will deal with them more mercifully than I. So He said: Then I will not degrade you among them. And it is reported on the authority of Anas that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" enquired at his Lord concerning the sins of his people and said: O Lord, assign their adjudication to me, so that no one but myself may scrutinize their evil doings. So Allah revealed to him: They are your people and they are my creatures, and I am more merciful with them than you. I shall not assign their adjudication to other than myself, so that neither you nor anyone else may scrutinize their evil deeds. And he Muhammad said: My life is good for you and my death is good for you. My life, because I lay down for you the practice and frame the Law for you; and my death, because your deeds have been open to me, and whatever I have seen of them that was good, I have praised Allah for it, and I have asked Allah to pardon you whatever I have seen of evil.

And he (Muhammad) said on a certain day: O generous Pardoner. So Gabriel said: Do you know what the interpretation of *generous Pardoner is?* It is as follows: Surely He has pardoned evil deeds in mercy; in His generosity He has substituted good deeds for them. And the Prophet heard a man saying: O Lord I ask You for the completion of blessing. So he said: Do you know what the completion of blessing is? He said: No. He said: The entrance into the Garden. The Scholars said: Allah has completed His blessing for us in His approving Islam for us, when He said: "I have completed My blessing for you and have approved Islam as your religion." (Al-Ma'idah 3)

﴿ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِى وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمَ دِينًا ﴾

And according to the tradition: When the creature commits a sin and asks Allah for pardon, Allah says to His angels: Observe my creature, he has committed a sin and he knows that he has a Lord who will pardon and take away his sin; I testify to you that I have pardoned him. And according to the tradition: If a creature were to sin so that his sins reached the clouds of the heavens, I would pardon him them in so far as he asked pardon of Me and hoped in Me. And according to the tradition: If My creature were to meet Me with sins the equal of the earth, I would meet him with pardon the equal of the earth. And according to the tradition: Surely the Angel holds the reed-pen aloft for six hours so as not to make a mark against the creature, when he sins; and, if he repents and asks for pardon, he will not record it against him; and, if not, he will record it as an evil deed. And according to another version: If he performs a good deed after he has recorded it against him, the Angel of the right hand says to the Angel of the left (for the former has command over the

latter): Cast away the evil deed (so that one multiple of ten is cast away from his good deed) and credit to him nine good deeds. So the evil deed is cast away from him.

And Anas reported in a tradition that the Prophet said: When the creature commits a sin, it is recorded against him. So a nomadic Arab said: And, if he repents of it ? He said: It is erased from him. He said: If he returns to sin? The Prophet said: It is recorded against him. The nomad said: And, if he repents? He said: It is blotted out from his page. He said: For how long? He said: For as long as he begs for pardon and repents towards Allah. Surely Allah does not grow weary in pardoning until the creature grows weary of begging for pardon. And, when the creature purposes a good deed, the Master of the right hand writes it down as a good deed before he performs it; and, if he performs it, he records ten good deeds. Then Allah multiplies it to seven hundred multiples. And, when he meditates a sin, it is not recorded against him; and, when he performs it, one sin is recorded, and beyond it is the goodness of Allah's act of pardon.

And a man came to the Prophet and said: O Messenger of Allah, I do not keep any fast except the month of Ramadan without supererogation, and I pray only the five prayers without supererogation, and I give no voluntary alms in respect of my wealth, and there is neither pilgrimage nor obedience beyond what is obligatory to my credit. Where am I when I die? So the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" smiled and said: Yes, you are with me; because you have kept your heart from two things, rancour and envy, and your tongue from two things, slander and falsehood, and your eyes from two things, looking at what Allah has forbidden and contemning a Muslim with them, you will enter the Garden with me, because of my rejoicing at these two things.

And in a lengthy tradition ascribed to Anas (it is reported) that the (above-mentioned) nomad said: O Messenger of Allah, who will preside over the adjudication of the people? So he said: Allah. He said: In Person? He said: Yes. So the nomad smiled and he (Muhammad) said: Why did you laugh? So he said: Surely, when the Magnanimous One decrees (punishment) He pardons, and, when He fixes the reckoning, He forgives. So the Prophet said: The nomad has spoken the truth, Assuredly there is no one more magnanimous than Allah; He is without peer among those who are magnanimous. Then he (Anas) said: The nomad grasped it. And again in it (the Prophet said): Truly Allah has ennobled the Ka'bah and made it great, and, if a creature should demolish it stone upon stone, then should set it ablaze, he has not reached the sin of the person who makes sport of one of the friends of Allah. The nomad said: Who are the friends of Allah? He said: The believers are all friends of Allah. Have you not heard the saying of Allah: "Allah is a friend of those who believe, bringing them out of the darkness into light"? (Al-Baqarah 257)

﴿ ٱللَّهُ وَلِيُّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ﴾

And according to certain traditions: The believer is preferred more than the Ka'bah. Also: The believer is good and pure. Also: The believer is preferred more than the angels in the sight of Allah. And according to the

tradition: Allah created Hell out of the excess of His mercy as a whip. With it Allah drives His creatures to the Garden. And in another tradition: Allah says: I have created men solely that they might exploit me and I have not created them to exploit them. And according to a tradition of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri on the authority of the Messenger of Allah: Allah has not created anything but He has matched it with what dominates it, and He has made His mercy to dominate His wrath. And according to the celebrated tradition: Truly Allah inscribed mercy on His Self before He created men; truly, My mercy dominates My anger.

And on the authority of Mu'adh Ibn Jabal and Anas Ibn Malik it is reported that he (Muhammad) said: Whoever says: There is no Allah but Allah will enter the Garden, and the Fire will not touch him whose last words are: There is no Allah but Allah. And, if a man encounters Allah not having associated anything with Him, the Fire is denied access to him. And the person in whose heart is the weight of an atom of faith will not enter it (the Fire). And according to another tradition: If the unbeliever knew the spaciousness of the mercy of Allah, not a single one would despair of His Garden. And, when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited His saying: "Surely the earthquake of the Hour is a mighty thing." (Al-Hajj 1)

﴿ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ ٱلسَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝ ﴾

He said: Do you know which day this is? This is the day on which it will be said to Adam: Arise and dispatch the detachment destined for the Fire from among your seed. So he will say: How many? And it will be said: Out of every thousand nine hundred and ninety nine are for the Fire and one for the Garden. He (the narrator) went on: So he made the people despair and they began to weep and while away their days in idleness and inactivity, and so the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" attacked them and said: What is the matter with you that you will not work ? They said: And who would occupy themselves with work after what you have related to us on that point? And he said: How many are you among the nations? Where are Tāwīl and Thārīth and Mansak and Gog and Magog , nations whom only Allah can count? Among the rest of the nations you are but as the white hair in the coat of the black bull or the white mark in the fore-leg of the riding-beast.

So observe how he was driving the people with the whip of fear and leading them with the reins of hope to Allah. He drove them with the whip of fear at first, and, when that brought them beyond the point of equilibrium to the extreme of despair, he cured them with the therapy of hope and returned them to the equilibrium and the goal. And the latter did not contradict the former, but he made mention in the former of what he considered to be a cause of healing and confined himself to that. And, when they were in need of treatment with hope, he mentioned what completed the matter. And it is the responsibility of the preacher to imitate the Master of Preachers and to be humane in his employment of the traditions of fear and hope in accordance with need, after taking note of the inward defects. And, if he does not take care with that, his preaching will promote more disease than it will health.

And according to the tradition: If you had not sinned, Allah would have created a people who would and would have pardoned them. And in another version: He would have dismissed you and produced another creation of sinners, and have pardoned them. Surely, He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate. And according to the tradition: If you had not sinned, I would have feared of you what is more evil than sins. It was said: And what is that? He (Muhammad) said: Pride. And he (Muhammad) said: By the One in whose hand my soul is, Allah is more merciful with His creature, the believer, than the tender mother with her offspring. And according to the tradition: Assuredly Allah will pardon on the Day of Resurrection with a pardon that has not occurred to a single heart, so that even the Devil will strain towards it in the hope that it may impinge on him.

And according to the tradition: Truly Allah possesses a hundred mercies; of these He has stored up ninety nine beside Himself and has revealed one mercy in this present world. By virtue of it men show compassion to each other and the mother is compassionate to her child, and the beast is humane with its offspring. And, when the Day of Resurrection comes, He will join this mercy to the ninety nine; then He will spread them out upon all His creation and every single mercy is the match of the heavens and the earth, and only the child of perdition will perish at the hand of Allah at that time. And according to the tradition: There is not a single person among you whose work will give him entrance to the Garden or will save him from the Fire. They said: Not you either, O Messenger of Allah? He said: Not me either except that Allah should cover me with His mercy. And he said: Labour and be of good courage, and know that no man's works will save him.

And he (Muhammad) said: I have reserved my intercession for the great sinners among my people. Do you think it is for the submissive and the pious? No, it is for the warped and the dissolute. And he said: I am sent with the true religion which is both accommodating and conciliatory. And he said: I desire that the People of the two Books should know that in our religion there is accommodation. And a pointer to the meaning of this is the reply which Allah gave to the believers when they said: "And lay not upon us a burden." (Al-Baqarah 286)

﴿ وَلَا تُحَمِّلۡنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦ ﴾

And He said: "And He relieves them of their burdens and shackles which were upon them." (Al-A'raf 157)

﴿ وَيَضَعُ عَنۡهُمۡ إِصۡرَهُمۡ وَٱلۡأَغۡلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِي كَانَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡۚ ﴾

And Muhammad Ibn Al-Hanafiyyah related on the authority of `Ali that he said: When He sent down His saying: "Be magnanimous on a handsome scale", (Al-Hijr 85)

﴿ فَٱصۡفَحِ ٱلصَّفۡحَ ٱلۡجَمِيلَ ﴾

He (Muhammad) said: O Gabriel, and what is a handsome magnanimity? He (Gabriel) said: When you have pardoned whoever has wronged you and do not upbraid him. So he (Muhammad) said: O Gabriel, Allah is too

magnanimous to upbraid the one whom He has forgiven. So Gabriel wept and the Prophet wept, and Allah sent Michael to them both and he said: Truly, your Lord sends both of you His compliments and says: How would I upbraid the one whom I have pardoned? This would not be like My magnanimity. And the traditions which have to do with the means of hope are more than can be numbered.

Coming now to the reports?: Ali said: If a man commits a sin and Allah puts a covering over it in this world, He is too magnanimous to withdraw His covering in the next world. If a man commits a sin and is punished for it in this world, Allah is too equitable to repeat His punishment on His creature in the next world. And Ath-Thawri said: I do not desire that He should assign my adjudication to my parents, because I know that Allah will deal more mercifully with me than they. And one of the Fathers said: When the believer is disobedient, Allah covers him from the sight of the angels, that they should not see him and testify against him. And Muhammad Ibn Mus'ab wrote to Al-Aswad Ibn Salim in his own hand: Surely, when the creature is profligate and lifts up his hands praying and saying: O Lord, the angels will screen his voice. And thus the second and the third time, until, when he says the fourth time: O my Lord, Allah says: How long will you screen from Me the voice of My creature? My creature knows that he has no Lord who will pardon sins but Me. I testify to you that I have pardoned him.

And Ibrahim Ibn Adham said: I was performing the circumambulation in solitude on a certain night, and it was a dark rainy night, and I halted at the obligatory place beside the gate and said: O my Lord keep me from sin so that I am never disobedient to You. And the voice of One unseen called out to me from the House : O Ibrahim, you are asking Me to keep you from sin, and all My believing creatures seek that from Me. But, if I should keep them from sin, upon whom should I bestow My bounty and to whom should I grant pardon?

And Al-Hassan used to say: If the believer had not sinned, he would have been flying in the Kingdoms of the Heavens , but Allah has held him down by his sins. And Al-Junaid said: If a speck of nobility should be visible, it will annex the evildoers to the well-doers. And Malik Ibn Dinar met Aban and said to him: For how much longer will you tell the people about the indulgences of Allah? So he said: O Abu Yahya, truly, I hope that what you see of Allah's pardon on the Day of Resurrection will make you rend these your clothes for joy.

And in an account of Rib'i Ibn Hirash concerning his brother who was among the most elect of the Followers, and was one of those who conversed after death. He (Rib'i) said: When my brother died, he was wrapped in his shroud and we laid him in his bier. Then he threw back the shroud from his face and sat upright and said: Truly, I encountered my Lord and He greeted me with intimacy and delight and was anything but angry, and truly, I experienced the affair as something easier than you suppose, so do not flag. And now Muhammad and his Companions are expecting me, so I shall return to them. He (Rib'i) went on: Then he prostrated himself, and it was as if a pebble had fallen into a dish, and so we bore him off and buried him.

And in the account of two men of the children of Israel who were brothers in Allah, and one of them was profligate and the other a devotee. And the latter used to warn the former and chide him, and so the other would say: Leave me alone. By my Lord, are you delegated to me as a watchman? This went on until he saw him on a certain day in the act of committing a great sin and was angry and said: Allah will not pardon you. So Allah will say (to the profligate) on the Day of Resurrection: Is anyone able to debar My mercy from My creatures? Go your way, for I have pardoned you. Then He will say to the devotee: As for you-the Fire is decreed for you. He (the narrator) said: By the One in whose hand my soul is, He has spoken a word which has destroyed his present world and his next world.

And it is also reported that a certain robber was pillaging the highway among the children of Israel for forty years, and Jesus passed by him, and, in his wake, one of the devotees of the children of Israel, numbered among the disciples. So the robber said to himself: The prophet of Allah is passing and his disciple is accompanying him; if I were to go down, I would be a third with the two of them. So he went down and was moved with the desire to draw near to the disciple, and he demeaned himself and magnified the disciple, saying to himself: One like myself may not walk at the side of this devotee. And the disciple sensed his presence and said to himself: This man is walking at my side. So he braced himself and made up to Jesus and walked at his side, while the robber remained behind him. So Allah revealed to Jesus: Say to them both: Assuredly the works of both of you are under review, and I have annulled whatever proceeded from your respective works. I have annulled the good works of the disciple because of his pride in himself, and I have annulled the evil works of the other, according to the measure of his disparagement of himself. So tell these tidings to both of them. And the robber joined himself to him (i.e. Jesus) in his itinerary and he made him one of his disciples.

And it is related on the authority of Masruq that one of the prophets was prostrating himself and an apostate trod on his neck, so that the pebbles adhered to his forehead. So the prophet raised his head in rage and said: Be off with you and Allah will certainly not pardon you. So Allah revealed to him: You are taking My name in vain in respect of My creatures. Surely I have pardoned him. And what is related on the authority of Ibn `Abbas approximates to this. That the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was inducing despair in the polytheists and was cursing them in his prayer, and His saying was revealed to him: " Not for you, (but for Allah), is the decision: whether He turn in Mercy to them, or punish them; for they are indeed wrong-doers." (Al Imran 128).

﴿ لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ ﴾

So he desisted from the prayer in which he was imprecating them, and Allah guided the body of those people to Islam.

And it is related in the report that there were two devotees equal in devotion. When they entered the Garden, one of them was elevated to the Highest Degrees over his companion. So he said: O Lord in what way did this man exceed me in

devotion on the earth? Yet, You have elevated him over me in the Highest Heaven. So Allah says: Truly, while he was on the earth, he was continually asking for the Highest Degrees, while you were asking for salvation from the Fire. So I have given every creature his request. And this is a pointer to the fact that worship which is on account of hope is the more meritorious, because love dominates the person who hopes more than it does the one who fears. And what a distinction is made by kings between the person who serves through fear of their punishment, and the one who serves out of the hope of their favours and magnanimity! On that account Allah has enjoined optimism, and for that reason he (Muhammad) said: Ask Allah for the Highest Degrees, for you are asking One who is magnanimous. And he said: When you ask Allah set the target high and ask for the Highest Paradise, for Allah will not think anything too great for him who asks.

And Bakr Ibn Salim As-Sawwaf said: We came into the presence of Malik Ibn Anas on the evening on which he was taken away by death, and we said: O Abu Abdullah, how are you? He said: I do not know what to say to you, except that you will find help from the pardon of Allah in what was not yours by desert. Then we did not stir until we had closed his eyes. (i.e. in death). And Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said in his supplication: My hoping in You along with my sins all but overcomes my hoping in You along with my good works, because, with respect to works, I rely on single-mindedness, and how shall I preserve it, since I am known to be with blemish? And I find myself with respect to my sins relying on Your pardon, and how will You not pardon them, since magnanimity is Your attribute?

And it is said: A Zoroastrian asked hospitality from Abraham, the Friend (sc. of Allah); so he said: If you become a Muslim, I will give you hospitality. So the Zoroastrian passed on, and Allah revealed to him (Abraham): You would not give him food except with his religion changed, and We have fed him for seventy years, notwithstanding his unbelief. If you had given him hospitality for a night, what responsibility would have fallen on you? So Abraham set off running after the Zoroastrian and brought him back and gave him hospitality. So the Zoroastrian said to him: By what means did it become plain to you? So he mentioned it to him. And the Zoroastrian said to him: Does He deal with me thus? Exhibit Islam to me that I may become a Muslim.

And the Spiritual Director Abu Sahl As-Suluki saw Abu Sahl Az-Zajjaji in a dream and he was speaking about the threat of everlasting punishment. So he (As-Suluki) said to him: How do you feel? He said: I find the affair easier than I had contemplated. And a certain individual saw Abu Sahl As-Suluki in a dream, indescribably fair in appearance. So he said to him: O Spiritual Director, by what means did you obtain this? So he said: Through supposing the best of my Lord. And it is related that Abu Al-Abbas Ibn Sarij saw in a dream in his mortal illness as if the Resurrection were actualized and behold! the Almighty was saying: Where are the Scholars? So they came. Then He said: What have you accomplished with what you knew? He (Abu Al-Abbas Ibn Sarij) went on: So

we said: O Lord we have come short and we have done evil. So He repeated the interrogation as if He were not satisfied with the answer and He desired another answer. So I said: As for me, there is no polytheism on my page, and You have promised that You will pardon whatever does not partake of it. And He said: Take him away, for I have pardoned you (all). And he died three nights later.

And it is said: There was a certain tippler who gathered together a party of his cronies and tossed to his boy four Dirhams and bade him buy some fruit for his party. And the boy passed by the door of the sitting-room of Mansur Ibn Ammar, while he was begging something for a poor man and saying: Whoever tosses him four Dirhams, I shall offer four petitions for him. So the boy tossed the Dirhams to him and Mansur said: What is it you desire that I should ask for you? So he said: I have a master from whom I desire to be released. So Mansur prayed. Then he said: Next request. That Allah would replace my Dirhams. So he prayed and then said: Next. He said: That Allah would bring my master to repentance. So he prayed; then he said: Next. He said: That Allah would pardon me and my master and you and the multitude. So Mansur prayed and the boy returned and his master said to him: What detained you? So he told the tale to him. He said: And what did he pray about? So he said: I asked freedom for myself. So he said to him: Go your way, for you are a free man. He said: And what was the second prayer? He said: That Allah would replace the Dirhams. He Said: You possess four thousand Dirhams. And what was the third prayer? He said: That Allah would bring you to repentance. He said: I have repented towards Allah. He said: And what was the fourth prayer? He said: That Allah would pardon me and you and the multitude, and him who spoke the prayer. He said: This one is not in my power. So, while he was passing that night, he had a vision in sleep, as if someone were speaking to him: You have done what was in your power, do you then think that I shall not do what is in My power? I have pardoned you and the boy and Man Ibn 'Ammar and the crowd which was present, all of them.

And it is related on the authority of `Abd Al-Wahhab Ibn `Abd Al-Hamid Ath-Thaqafi who said: I saw three men and a woman bearing a bier. So I took the place of the woman and we went off to the cemetery, and we prayed over the corpse and buried it. So I said to the woman: What was the relationship of the deceased man to you? She said: My son. I said: And did you not have any neighbours? She said: Yes, but they despised his condition. I said: And what was it? She Said: He was an effeminate. So I had compassion on her and brought her to my house and gave her money and corn and clothes. That night I had a vision. It was as if someone came to me like to the moon on the night when it is full, wearing white robes. And he began to thank me and I said: Who are you? So he said: The effeminate whom you buried to-day. My Lord had compassion on me for that the people contemned me.

And Ibrahim Al-Utrūsh said: We were sitting in Baghdad with Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi by the Tigris, when youths passed by in skiffs, beating with the oars and drinking and jesting. So they said to Ma'ruf: Do you not see them disobeying Allah

with obscene jests? Pray to Allah against them. So he lifted up his hands and said: O Allah, as you have given them joy in this world, give them joy in the next world. So the group said: All we asked of you was to pray against them. So he said: If He brings them joy in the next world, He will have forgiven them. And one of the Fathers used to say in his petitions: O Lord, what people was there ever that did not disobey You? Yet Your favour was bounteous upon them and Your provision lavish. Praise be to You, how clement You are! By Your Might! if disobedience is shown to You, You bestow favour in plenty and are lavish with provision, so that it is as if, O our Lord; You were not angry.

These are the means by which the relief of hope is induced in the hearts of the fearful and despairing. And, as for the foolish and self-deluded, it is not expedient that they should hear anything of that; no, they are to hear what we shall cite of the means of fear. For the most of people are not made healthy except through fear, just as the bad servant and the naughty boy are not reformed except through the whip and the stick and speech with an explicit threat. But the opposite of that would block up against them the door of health with respect to religion and this world.

PART TWO: FEAR

Part 2 includes eight chapters:

Exposition of essence of fear
Exposition of degrees of fear
Exposition of divisions of objects of fear
Exposition of merit of fear, and whether fear or hope is the optimum
Exposition of remedy of fear
Exposition of meaning of evil of Seal
Exposition of states of those among the prophets in respect to fear
Exposition of the states of those endued with faith who feared

CHAPTER ONE
EXPOSITION OF ESSENCE OF FEAR

It should be known that fear is an expression for the suffering of the heart and its conflagration by means of the anticipation of what is abhorred as a future contingency. And this has been made clear in the exposition of the essence of hope. And whoever is intimate with Allah, whose heart is ruled by truth and who lives in the present through his seeing the majesty of truth perpetually, no longer turns to the future and is possessed of neither fear nor hope. More, his state has become higher than fear or hope, for both of these are reins which preclude the soul from its excursions into laxness. Al-Wasiti has pointed to this in saying: Fear is a veil between Allah and the creature. Again he said: When the truth makes plain the things which are secret, there remains in them no residue for hope and fear.

And, in general, if the heart of the lover is distracted by fear of separation, while he is viewing his beloved, that would indicate a deficiency of vision, and the goal of the stations is simply constancy of vision. But, for the present, we are to discuss only the initial stations and so we shall say: The state of fear can also be

classified in terms of knowledge, state and action. With regard to knowledge, it is knowledge of the cause which leads to the thing which is abhorred. So that it is as if someone committed a crime against a king, then fell into his hands and feared that he would be put to death as an example, while pardon and escape were possibilities. But the suffering of his heart through fear is in proportion to the strength of his knowledge of the means which would lead to his being put to death, such as the enormity of his crime and the fact that the king in himself is rancorous, wrathful and revengeful, that he is surrounded by such as incite him to take vengeance and is isolated from such as would intercede with him in his case. And this than in his fear was destitute of any merit or virtue that might wipe out the trace of his crime with the king. Hence the knowledge that these means are manifest is a cause of the strength of the fear and the rigor of the suffering of the heart.

And fear is faint in proportion to the weakness of those means. And it may be that fear does not derive from the crime which the person who fears has committed, but is because of the nature of the object feared. As, for example, the person who falls into the claws of the lion, for he fears the lion because of the nature of the lion itself, namely, that, for the most part, it is avid and violent in pouncing on its prey. Even if its pouncing on its prey were within the province of choice, it might seem to the person threatened by it to be due to inborn disposition. Similarly the person who falls into the path of a torrent or into a blazing pit, for he fears the water because it is endowed by nature with the power of flowing and drowning, and likewise fire is endowed with burning. And the knowledge of the means of the thing which is abhorred is the cause which initiates and fans the conflagration and suffering of the heart, and that conflagration is fear. And, similarly, fear of Allah may sometimes be due to 'knowledge' of Allah and His attributes, that, if He destroyed the worlds, He would not care and no person would obstruct Him. And sometimes it may be due to the multitude of the sins of the creature through his committing deeds of disobedience; and sometimes it may be due to both of them together. And the strength of his fear will be in proportion to his 'knowledge' of his own defects and his 'knowledge' of the majesty of Allah and His self-subsistence, and that "He will not be asked about what He does, while they will be asked." (Al-Anbiya' 23)

﴿ لَا يُسْئَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْئَلُونَ ﴾

And the person most filled with fear in respect of His Lord is the man who has most 'knowledge' of himself and his Lord. For that reason he (Muhammad) said: I am the one who fears Allah most among you. And likewise Allah said: "Only the knowledgeable among his creatures fear Allah." (Fatir 28)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ﴾

Then, when 'knowledge' is perfected, the majesty of fear and the conflagration of the heart are produced. Then the trace of the conflagration flows from the heart into the body and the members and the attributes. In the body by

means of emaciation and paleness and fainting and shrieking and weeping, and it may be that in this way bitterness is inhaled and it leads to death; or it goes up to the brain and rots the intelligence; or it intensifies in strength and produces despair and hopelessness. In the members by restraining them from disobedience and binding them to deeds of obedience; by repairing what is defective and making ready for the future. And for that reason it is said: The man who fears is not he who weeps and wipes his eyes; no, it is he who forsakes that on whose account he fears punishment. And Abu 'l-Qasim Al-Hakim said: Whoever fears anything flees from it, and whoever fears Allah flees to Him. And it was said to Dhun-Nun : When is the creature a person who fears? He said: When he has brought himself down to the level of the sick man who is abstemious for fear that his sickness may be prolonged. In the attributes by stifling the lusts and blackening the pleasures, so that the disobediences beloved by him become abhorrent, just as honey becomes abhorrent to the man who desires it, when he 'knows' that there is poison in it. So the lusts are burned up by fear and the members are trained, and self-abasement and humility and submissiveness and lowliness obtain in the heart, and pride, rancour and envy abandon it.

Moreover he is absorbed with concern through his fear and his observing the peril of its sequel, and has no leisure for other than it. And he has no preoccupation but vigilance and self-examination and spiritual combat and conserving breaths and glances and reprehending the soul for the suggestions and footsteps and words (sc. of Satan). And his condition is that of the man who falls into the claws of a harmful lion, and he does not know whether it will ignore him and he will escape, or it will pounce on him and he will perish. So he will be engrossed outwardly and inwardly with what he fears and there will be no room in him for anything else. This is the state of the person over whom fear has prevailed and gained the mastery. The state of the company of the Companions and Followers was thus. And the strength of vigilance and self-examination and spiritual combat is in proportion to the strength of fear which is the suffering of the heart and its conflagration. And the strength of fear is in proportion to the strength of 'knowledge' of the majesty of Allah and His attributes and His actions, and in proportion to the defects of the soul and the perils and terrors which confront it.

And the least of the degrees of fear whose trace is visible in actions is the blocking of access to the forbidden; and the restraint which excludes the forbidden is called abstinence. If its strength increases, it restrains from what directs at it the possibility of the forbidden, and hence also from that whose forbiddance is not a matter of certainty, and that is called piety, since piety is the forsaking of that which one suspects so as to arrive at what one does not suspect. And it may urge a man on to forsake what has no evil in it for fear of what has evil in it, and this is sincere piety. When fully consecrated worship is joined to it, the consequence is that one does not build what he does not inhabit nor gather what he does not eat, nor turn to this world, since he knows that it will abandon him, nor expend a single breath except towards Allah.

This is sincerity and its owner is worthy to be named *Sincere.* And piety

enters into sincerity and abstinence into piety and chastity into abstinence, for it (chastity) is a specialized expression for being cut off from the determinism of lusts. Therefore fear is effective in the members through restraint and perseverance, and it is in virtue of restraint that it is given the new name of chastity which is refraining from the determinism of lusts. And abstinence is higher than it, since it is more universal, because it is refraining from everything forbidden. And higher than it is piety, since it is the name for refraining from the sum of things forbidden and dubious. And beyond it is the name *Sincere* and *He who is brought near.* And the course of the most ultimate rank in relation to what precedes it is from the most general to the most particular, for, when you have mentioned the most particular, you have mentioned the whole. As if you were saying: Mankind, whether Arab or non-Arab, and Arab, whether Quraish or non-Quraish, and Quraish, whether Hashimi or non-Hashimi, and Hashimi, whether Alid or non-Alid, and Alid, whether Hassani or Hussaini; and, when you have mentioned, for example, that a man is Hassani, you have described him totally, and, if you describe him as Alid, you describe him by what is above him-what is more general than he. Similarly when I have said *sincere,* I have said that a man is pious, is abstemious and is chaste. And there is no need for you to suppose that these numerous names point to numerous dissimilar meanings, for that would reduce you to confusion, just as confusion reigns over whoever seeks (different) meanings from linguistic variants, where the meanings have not followed the variants. So this is a pointer to the concert of the meanings of fear, and what surrounds it on the higher side, such as the 'knowledge' which determines it, and on the lower side, such as the actions which derive from it through restraint and perseverance.

CHAPTER 2

EXPOSITION OF DEGREES OF FEAR AND ITS DIFFERENTIATION INTO POWER AND WEAKNESS

It should be known that fear is commendable. Often it is supposed that all fear is commendable, and that the more powerful and frequent it is the more it is commendable. This is a fallacy. No, fear is the whip of Allah by which He drives His creatures towards perseverance in knowledge and action, so that by means of both of these they may obtain the rank of nearness to Allah. And what is most salutary for the beast is that it should not escape the whip, and thus with the boy, but that does not point to the conclusion that excessive beating is commendable. And likewise with fear; it has deficiency and equilibrium, and what is commendable is the equilibrium and the mean.

The person who is deficient in it is he who tends towards effeminate softness which alights on his mind, whenever he hears a verse from the Qur'an, and produces weeping, and the tears overflow; and similarly when he sees a cause of terror. And, when that cause is absent from his attention, his heart returns to negligence. So this is a fear which is deficient, of little profit and feeble in utility; just like the slight stick with which the powerful riding-beast is beaten, which gives it no serious pain and does not urge it on to the destination, nor is it salutary for its correction. Such is the fear of all men except the Gnostics and the

Knowledgeable. And I do not mean by Knowledgeable (learned) those who are stamped with the marks of Scholars or are called by their names, for they, of all men, are the most distant from fear. No, I mean those who are knowledgeable concerning Allah and His Days and His actions, and that is a thing whose existence is rare at the present time. And, for that reason, Al-Fudail Ibn 'Iyad said: When it is said to you: Do you fear Allah?, keep silence. For, if you say: No, you are an unbeliever; and, if you say: Yes, you are a liar. And he indicated by this that it is fear that restrains the members from deeds of disobedience and binds them to deeds of obedience, and whatever does not take effect in the members is no more than an impulse and a fleeting motion which does not deserve the name of fear.

The extremist is he whose fear is strong and transgresses the limit of the equilibrium, so that it goes out towards hopelessness and despair, and it again is reprehensible, because it stultifies action. Fear may also issue in sickness and weakness and depression and bewilderment and intellectual atrophy. The aim of fear is the same as the aim of the whip which is to incite to action. If it is otherwise, fear is imperfect, because it is deficient in its essence, since its product is ignorance and impotence. Ignorance, because one does not know the sequel of his affair; and, if he 'knew' he would not be afraid, since the thing which is feared is that about which there is doubt. Impotence, because he is exposed to a forbidden thing which he is unable to repel. Therefore it (fear) is commendable in connection with human deficiencies, and only knowledge is commendable in itself and its essence, together with power and everything by which it is possible to describe Allah. And that by which it is not possible to describe Allah is not perfect in its essence and only becomes commendable in connection with a deficiency which is greater than it; just as the enduring of therapeutic pain is commendable, because it is milder than the pain of disease and death. And whatever issues in despair is reprehensible, and fear also may issue in disease, weakness, depression and bewilderment and intellectual atrophy; it may even issue in death. All that is reprehensible and is to be likened to the beating which kills the boy and the whip which slays the riding-beast or makes it ill or breaks one of its limbs.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" mentioned the means of hope and multiplied them simply in order that he might thereby treat the shock of excessive fear which leads to despair or one of these conditions, and all that is implied with respect to a condition. The commendable part of it is whatever leads to the goal which is intended by it, and whatever comes short of it or goes beyond it is reprehensible. The profit of fear is caution and abstinence and piety and spiritual combat and worship and reflection and recollection, and all the means that bring about union with Allah. And all of that requires life along with health of body and wholeness of intellect, and whatever impairs these means is reprehensible.

If you say: Whoever fears and dies because of his fear is a martyr, and how can his state be reprehensible? Know that the meaning of his being a martyr is that he possesses a rank in virtue of his death through fear which he would not

have attained had he died at that time through a cause other than fear. So that in connection with him it is meritorious, but in connection with the ordering of his survival and the prolongation of his life in obedience to Allah and the treading of His paths it is not meritorious. No, the person who is making a pilgrimage to Allah by the path of reflection and spiritual combat and the ascent of the degrees of `knowledge' possesses at every instant the rank of martyr and martyrs. Were it otherwise the rank of a lad who is killed or the madman whom a lion mauls would be higher than the rank of a prophet or saint who dies a natural death, and this would be absurd. Nor is it proper that this should be supposed. No, the most valued of blessings is prolongation of life in obedience to Allah, and everything which annuls life or mind or health (for life is impaired when it is impaired) is a loss and deprivation in relation to some conditions, even if some parts of it should have merit in relation to other conditions. Just as martyrdom has merit in relation to what is below it, not in relation to the degree of the *Pious* and the *Sincere.*

So, if fear does not effect action, its existence and non-existence are alike, just as the whip which does not accelerate the movement of the riding-beast. And, if it is effective, it has degrees according as its effects are visible. For, if it is an incentive only to chastity, it is the refraining from the determinism of lusts, so that it possesses a degree. And, if it produces abstinence, it is higher (in degree). And the most ultimate of its degrees is that it should produce the degrees of the *Sincere,* which is that it should tear one away outwardly and inwardly from what is other than Allah, so that there remains in him no room for other than Allah, and this is the most ultimate of its commendable characteristics, and it is accompanied with preservation of health and mind. If it goes beyond this towards the atrophy of mind and health, it is sickness which must be treated, if there is an effectual treatment. And, if it were commendable, its treatment by hope and other means until it passes away would not be necessary. For this reason Sahl used to say to novices who persisted with fasting over a long period: Keep your wits. Allah has never had a saint who was mentally deficient.

CHAPTER 3
EXPOSITION OF DIVISIONS OF FEAR IN RELATION TO THE OBJECT WHICH IS FEARED

It should be known that fear does not deserve the name except it concerns the expectation of what is abhorred, whether it is abhorred in its essence, such as fire, or because it leads to what is abhorred, as deeds of disobedience are abhorred, because they lead to what is abhorred in the next world; just as the invalid abhors the fruits which do him injury, because they lead to death. So everyone who fears is bound to picture to himself an abhorred thing from one of the two divisions, and the expectation of it grows powerful in his heart, so that his heart is burnt up through his terror of the abhorred thing.

And the station of those who fear is differentiated in accordance with the kind of abhorred things whose dread dominates their hearts. So there are those whose hearts are dominated by what is not essentially abhorred, but abhorred because of what is outside itself, such as those who are dominated by the fear

of death before repentance or a fear of a deficiency of repentance and a breaking of the covenant ; or the fear of a diminishing of strength so as not to fulfill the complete demands of Allah. Or the fear that the tenderness of the heart will pass away and that it will be replaced by hardness; or the fear of inclining away from uprightness; or the fear of the mastery of custom in the following of the familiar lusts; or the fear that Allah will entrust a man to his good works in which he has put his trust, and which he has boasted about among Allah's creatures. Or the fear of taking Allah for granted by reason of the multitude of Allah's favours towards him; or the fear of being distracted from Allah by other than Allah; or the fear of being deceived by the regular succession of favours. Or the fear that the defections of his obedience will be uncovered, where there is revealed to him from Allah what he did not take into the reckoning. Or the fear that people will persecute him with back-biting, perfidy, dissimulation and premeditated thoughts of evil. Or the fear of his lack of knowledge of what may happen in the remainder of his life; or the fear of punishment being brought forward to this world and his being disgraced before death. Or the fear of being deceived by the blandishments of this world; or the fear that Allah will scrutinize his secret heart at a moment when he is heedless of Him. Or the fear of being sealed at death with the Seal of evil; or the fear of the predestination which has been predestined to him from all eternity.

And all these are things which the Gnostics fear and there is that which is particularly advantageous to everyone, which is the treading of the path of caution so as to exclude what leads to the thing feared. And so whoever fears the mastery of custom over him will persevere in weaning himself from custom. And whoever fears that Allah will scrutinize his secret heart occupies himself with the purifying of his heart from the whisperings (of Satan). And thus with the remainder of the divisions; and among those fears the one which most overcomes assurance is the fear of the Seal, for its affair is full of danger. The highest of all the divisions and the one which gives best access to perfection of 'knowledge' is the fear of predestination, because the Seal follows from what has been predestined, and is a branch which springs from it in accordance with the interaction of many causes. So the Seal makes manifest what the (eternal) decree has predestined in the essence of the Book.

The relation of him who fears the Seal to him who fears predestination is like that of two men in judgement of whom the king has signed a decree, the import of which might be their beheading or the assigning to them of a Ministry. And the decree was not yet delivered to them and the heart of one was tied up with the circumstance of the delivery of the decree and its publication and what it would disclose; and the heart of the other was tied up with the circumstance of the decree of the king, its nature, and what it was that had passed through his mind at the moment of the decree, of mercy or of anger. And this was to turn towards the cause which is a higher activity than to turn towards what is a corollary. And likewise to turn towards the eternal decree in promulgating which the reed-pen flowed is a higher activity than turning towards what is made manifest at the End.

The Prophet pointed to this when he was in the pulpit and clenched his right hand and said: This is the Book of Allah in which He has written the people of the Garden with their names and the names of their fathers of which there shall be no increase and no diminution. Then he clenched his left hand and said: This is the Book of Allah in which He has written the people of the Fire with their names and the names of their fathers of which there shall be no increase and no diminution. And let the people of bliss do the works of the people of woe, so that it is said: It is as if they were numbered with them; more, they are identical with them. Then Allah will save them before death, even if it is in the time between two milkings of she-camel. And let the people of woe do the works of the people of bliss, so that it is said: It is as if they were numbered with them; more, they are identical with them. Then Allah will extract them before death, even if it is in the time between two milkings of a she-camel. He who is numbered among the blessed is so by the decree of Allah, as is the reprobate by the decree of Allah, and works are in the nature of Seals.

And this accords with the division of those who fear into the person who fears his disobedience and sin, and the one who fears Allah in Person, because of His attributes and majesty and characteristics which, without a doubt, compel awe. So this (fear) is the highest in rank, and, for that reason, his fear endures, even if he enters into the obedience of the *Sincere.* As for the other it is in the target area of self-deception, and the safest part of it is if one perseveres in obedience. So fear of disobedience is the fear of the Sound in Faith, and the fear of Allah is that of the Unitarians and the *Sincere.* It is the fruit of 'knowledge' concerning Allah, and whoever 'knows' Him and 'knows' His attributes, knows from His attributes how He is worthy to be feared apart altogether from sin. More, if the disobedient person 'knew' Allah as he ought to 'know' Him, he would fear Allah and would not fear his disobedience. And were it not that He is to be feared in His Person, He would not constrain him to disobedience and smooth its path for him and prepare its means, for the facilitating of the means of disobedience is alienation. And he has not committed disobedience prior to his (present) disobedience in virtue of which he deserves to be constrained to disobedience and to have access to its means. Nor is obedience preceded by merit in virtue of which favour is shown to him for whom obedience is made easy and the path of communion smoothed for him. For the disobedient person has had disobedience decreed to him whether he wills it or not ; and thus with the obedient person. And He who exalts Muhammad to the Highest Heaven irrespective of merit which he had acquired prior to its taking place, and abases Abu Jahl in the Lowest Hell irrespective of sin which he had committed prior to its taking place, is worthy to be feared for His attribute of majesty.

For whoever obeys Allah, obeys because the will to obedience has dominion over him and power comes to him, and, after the creation of the irrevocable will and the complete power, the action comes into being of necessity. And he who is disobedient is so because a powerful and irrevocable will has dominion over him, and the means and power come to him, and the action, in the wake of the will

and the power, is of necessity. Would that I knew what it is that determines the preferment of this man and his being singled out through the dominion over him of the will to obedience, and what determines the abasement of that man and his alienation through the dominion over him of the impulses of disobedience, and how this is transferred to the creature! But, since the transfer goes back to the eternal decree, irrespective of sin or merit, fear of One who decrees as He wills and legislates as He desires is a resolution with every intelligent person. And beyond this meaning is the secret of predestination whose dissemination is not permissible.

And the understanding of the fear of Him in respect of His attributes is not possible except by parable. Were it not for the permission of the Law, the man of insight would not have dared to mention it. So it has come down in the tradition: Surely Allah revealed to David: Fear Me as you fear the harmful lion. And this is the parable which lets you understand what is the effect of the meaning, even if it does not acquaint you with its cause. For to be acquainted with its cause is to be acquainted with the secret of predestination, and He does not disclose that except to His 'People'. And the conclusion to be drawn is that the lion is to be feared not because of the sin which you have previously committed against it, but because of its characteristics, its violence and rapaciousness and arrogance and awfulness, and because it does what it will and does not care. For, if it killed you, its heart would be untouched by compunction, and it would feel no pain at killing you. And, if it left you alone, it would not leave you out of pity for you or to preserve your breath. No, you are in its sight too insignificant for it to notice you, whether dead or alive. More, the killing of a thousand like you and the killing of a gnat are on one plane with it, since that does not impugn the animal kingdom or the power and rapaciousness attributed to it. And the parable has its highest application to Allah. Whoever 'knows' Him 'knows' with inward sight which is more powerful and trustworthy and transparent than outward sight. He speaks the truth in His saying: These to the Garden and I do not care; and these to the Fire and I do not care. And of the things which compel awe and fear 'knowledge' that He is self-subsistent and that He does not care will suffice you.

As for the second class of those who fear, the thing abhorred is pictured within them, such as the image of the pangs of death and its rigors, or the interrogation of Munkar and Nakir , or the punishment of the grave, or the terror of the resurrection , or the awfulness of the halting-place before Allah and shame because of the drawing back of the veil, and the interrogation about the smallest details or the fear of the Bridge and its edge and the manner of crossing over it; or the fear of the Fire and its shackles and terrors, or the fear of being banned from the Garden, the House of Bliss and the enduring Kingdom, and from a diminution of degrees ; or the fear of being veiled from Allah.

And all these means are abhorred in themselves and are, indubitably, to be feared. And the states of those who fear are differentiated according to them; and the highest of them in rank is the fear of alienation and of being veiled from Allah and this is the fear of the Gnostics. And what comes before this is the fear

of the Practitioners and the Sound in Faith and the Ascetics and the body of the people. He whose 'knowledge' is not perfect and whose inner sight is not opened up does not feel the pleasure of union nor the pain of alienation and separation. When it is mentioned to him that the Gnostic does not fear the Fire but fears only the veil, he finds that inwardly repugnant, and marvels at it in his soul. And it may be that he would find repugnant the pleasure of looking at the face of Allah, the Magnanimous One, were it not that the Law precludes him from being repugnant to it. And his confessing it with the tongue derives from the compulsion of authority, and, were it otherwise, it would not be inwardly vouched for, because he 'knows' only the pleasure of the stomach, of sexual intercourse and of the eye (when he looks at colours and fair faces), and, in general, every pleasure in which the beasts are his associates. As for the pleasure of the Gnostics they only attain to it, and its classification and exposition are forbidden to whoever is not a party to it. And whoever is a party to it himself possesses the insight, and so has no need that someone else should expound it to him. The fear of those who fear can be traced to these divisions. Let us ask Allah for good success through His magnanimity.

CHAPTER 4

EXPOSITION OF MERIT OF FEAR AND INCLINATION TO IT

It should be known that the merit of fear is sometimes 'known' by consideration and reflection and sometimes by the verses and the traditions . With regard to reflection its procedure is that the merit of anything is in proportion to its adequacy to conduct to the bliss of an encounter with Allah in the next world, since there is no goal except bliss and there is no bliss for the creature except in meeting His Master and being near to Him. And everything which assists him possesses merit, and its merit is in proportion to its goal. For it has been made plain that there is no passage to the bliss of encountering Allah in the next world except through the attaining of His love and through intimacy with Him in this world. And love is not obtained except by 'knowledge', and 'knowledge' is not obtained except by constant reflection; and intimacy is not obtained except by love and constant recollection. And perseverance in recollection and reflection are facilitated only when the seed of this present world is cut off from the heart, and it will not be cut off except by the forsaking of the pleasures and the lusts of this world. And the forsaking of things desired is not possible except by the strangling of lusts, and a lust is not strangled by anything as it is by the fire of fear. So fear is the fire which burns up lusts, for its merit is in proportion to the extent to which it burns up lusts and restrains from actions of disobedience and incites to actions of obedience. And that is differentiated according to the different degrees of fear (see above) and how can such fear be other than meritorious, since by it chastity and abstinence and piety and spiritual combat are obtained, and these are actions both meritorious and commendable which promote nearness to Allah.

As for the procedure of quoting the verses and the traditions what concerns the merit of fear is beyond the range of definition. It will suffice you as a pointer to its merit that Allah has united in those who fear guidance and mercy and knowledge and satisfaction and these are the concert of the stations of the

people of the Gardens. Allah said: "And guidance and mercy to those who fear their Lord." (Al-A'raf 154)

﴿ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ ﴾

And He said: "Only the knowledgeable among Allah's creatures fear Him." (Fatir 28)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُاْ ﴾

He attributed to them knowledge in respect of their fear and said: "Allah was well-pleased with them and they with Him." (Al-Bayyinah 8)

﴿ رَّضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُواْ عَنْهُ ﴾

This refers to whoever fears his Lord. And everything which points to the merit of knowledge points to the merit of fear, because fear is the fruit of knowledge. For that reason it has come down in a tradition of Moses: As for those who fear they possess the Highest Companion . So observe how he has singled them out for the fellowship of the Highest Companion, and that is because they are knowledgeable and the knowledgeable possess the rank of the fellowship of the prophets, because they are the heirs of the prophets, and the fellowship of the Highest Companion belongs to the prophets and whoever overtakes them. And for this reason, when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was given the option during his mortal sickness of remaining in the world or going to Allah, he said: I ask of You the Highest Companion.

Therefore, if one looks to what produces fear, it is knowledge, and if one looks to its product, it is abstinence and piety, and there is no secret about what constitutes their respective merits, so that the sequel is stamped with piety as its special attribute just as praise is the exclusive attribute of Allah and blessing of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", so that it is said: Praise to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and the sequel to the pious and blessing upon our master Muhammad and all his family. For Allah has connected piety particularly with Himself, for He said: " It is not their meat nor their blood, that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him: He has thus made them subject to you, that you may glorify Allah for His guidance to you: and proclaim the Good News to all who do right. (Al-Hajj 37)

﴿ لَن يَنَالَ ٱللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَٰكِن يَنَالُهُ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ مِنكُمْ كَذَٰلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُواْ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

Piety is simply an expression for the restraint which is regulated by fear and so He said: "The most preferred of you with Allah are those who are most god-fearing among you." (Al-Hujurat 13)

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ﴾

For that reason Allah enjoined piety on those who are first and those who are last, and said: "We have charged those who were given the Book before you, and you too show piety to Allah." (An-Nisa' 131)

﴿ وَصَّيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ﴾

And He said: "But fear me, if you are really believers." (Al Imran 175)

﴿ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

So He commanded fear and made it compulsory and a condition of faith. For that reason it cannot be envisaged that a believer will be disjoined from fear, and, if it is weak, the weakness of his fear will be in proportion to the weakness of his 'knowledge' and his faith. And the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said concerning the merit of piety: When Allah musters the first and the last for the appointment of a Day which is fixed, behold! a voice, which those furthest away will hear equally with those nearest, will say: O you people, I have answered your shouts since your creation to this day, so you answer my call to-day. It is nothing but your deeds which will rebound to you, O you people. Surely, I have made a standard and you have made a standard, and you have depreciated my standard and appreciated your standard. I said: "The most preferred of you with Allah are those who are most god-fearing among you", (Al-Hujurat 13)

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ﴾

And you disdained it except that you say: So and so, son of so and so and so and so, is richer than so and so. Hence to-day I shall depreciate your standard and appreciate my standard. Where are the pious? So He will raise a banner for the people and they will follow their banner to their lodgings and they will enter the Garden irrespective of what is due to them.

And Muhammad said: The head of wisdom is the fear of Allah . And he said to Ibn Mas'ud: If you are desirous of meeting me then multiply fear after me. And Al-Fudail said: If a man fears Allah, fear points him to every good. And ash-Shibli said: There is no day that I have feared Allah, but that I have seen in respect of Him a category of wisdom and admonition which I had never (previously) seen. And Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: No believer performs an evil deed but two good deeds overtake it, namely, the fear of punishment and the hope of pardon, just like a fox between two lions. And in a tradition of Moses: As for the abstemious, there remains no one except the abstemious but that I make the closest examination of him and scrutinize what is in his hands, for I feel embarrassment on their account (i.e. on account of the abstemious) and have (too much) respect for them that I should halt them for the reckoning.

And abstinence and piety are names derived from meanings which are conditional on fear. If they are divorced from fear, they do not bear those names. And likewise what constitutes the merits of recollection is no secret, and Allah has made it the special attribute of those who fear. So He said: " The admonition will be received by those who fear (Allah)." (Al-A'la 10)

﴿ سَيَذَّكَّرُ مَن يَخْشَىٰ ﴾

And He said: "He who fears the station of his Lord will have two Gardens." (Ar-Rahman 46)

﴿ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ ﴾

And he (Muhammad) said: Allah said: By My might, I shall not unite in my creature two fears and two securities, for, if he feels secure in Me in this world, I shall terrify him on the Day of Resurrection. And, if he fears Me in this world, I shall make him secure on the Day of Resurrection. And he also said: If a man fears Allah, everything fears him; and, if a man fears other than Allah, Allah threatens him with everything. And he said: The most consummate of you in intelligence are those whose fear of Allah is most rigorous, and who are best at perceiving what Allah has commanded and forbidden.

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: If Miskin Ibn Adam had feared the Fire as he feared poverty, he would have entered the Garden. Dhu 'l-Nun said: Whoever fears Allah with his whole heart, his love to Allah is intense and his most inward part is right with Him. Dhu 'l-Nun said again: It is fitting that fear should be more dominant than hope, for, when hope is dominant, the heart is disordered. And Abu Al-Hussain Ad-Darir used to say: The mark of bliss is fear of being a reprobate, because fear is a rein between Allah and His creature, and, when his rein is severed, he perishes with those who perish. And it was said to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: Who of Allah's creatures is most secure for the morrow? He said: Those of them whose fear of to-day is most intense. And Sahl said: You will not experience fear, until you eat what is permitted. And it was said to Al-Hassan: O Abu Sa'id, how can we set about sitting down with parties who threaten us, so that our hearts almost fly away with terror? So he said: By Allah! if you mix with parties who threaten you until security overtakes you, it is better for you than that you should fraternize with parties who make you feel safe until fear overtakes you.

Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: Fear has never abandoned any heart but a ruin. And `A'ishah said: I said: O Messenger of Allah: "Those who give what they give and their hearts are fearful" (Al-Mu'minun 60)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا ءَاتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ ﴾

Does this refer to the man who steals and commits adultery? He said: No, but to the man who fasts and prays (the statutory prayers) and gives supererogatory alms and fears that it may not be accepted of him.

And the extreme dangers which are involved in feeling secure from the stratagems of Allah and His punishment cannot be defined and all that is a eulogy of fear, because the guiltiness of a thing is a eulogy of its contradiction which negates it. And the contradiction of fear is security, just as the contradiction of hope is despair. And just as the guiltiness of despair is a pointer to the merit of hope, so the guiltiness of fancied security is a pointer to the merit of fear which is contradictory to it. More, we shall say: All that is involved in the merit of hope is a pointer to the merit of fear, because the two are interdependent. For everyone who hopes for a desired object cannot but fear that he should miss it, for, if he did not fear that he should miss it, he would not be hoping in expectation of it, since he would not be desirous of it. So fear and hope are interdependent and it would be absurd that one should be

severed from the other. Certainly it is possible that one should dominate the other, while the two are united, and it is possible for the heart to be occupied with one and to have no regard to the other for the moment, because of its being negligent of it. This is so, because, from the conditional character of hope and fear, their interdependence is with an object of doubt, since whatever is specified is not hoped for nor feared. Therefore the object of desire whose existence is possible its non-existence is also possible-indubitably. Hence the assumption that it exists refreshes the heart and that is hope, and the assumption that it does not exist pains the heart and that is fear. And the two assumptions indubitably conflict with each other, since the affair which is expected is in doubt.

Certainly one of the two aspects of doubt may preponderate over the other in proportion with the presence of certain of the means and the name of that is supposition, and that would be a cause of the dominance of one of the two over the other. And, when the existence of the object of desire dominates the supposition, hope is strengthened and fear is concealed in relation to it, and *vice versa.* And in every circumstance the two of them are interdependent, and, for that reason, He said: "And they invoke Us through yearning and awe." (Al-Anbiya 90)

﴿ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا ﴾

And He also said: "They invoke their Lord through fear and yearning." (As-Sajdah 16)

﴿ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ﴾

And, for that reason, Arabic has defined fear in terms of hope, for He said: "What is the matter with you? You do not hope in Allah with reverence." (Nuh 13).

﴿ مَّا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ﴾

That is, you do not fear. And there are the many passages in the Qur'an where hope has the meaning of fear and that is because of their interdependence, since the practice of Arabic is to express a thing in terms of what is complementary to it.

More, I say that everything which constitutes the merit of weeping through fear of Allah is a demonstration of the merit of fear, for weeping is the fruit of fear. And He said: "Then let them laugh little and weep much." (At-Tawbah 82)

﴿ فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا ﴾

And He said: "They weep and it increases their humility." (Al-Isra' 109)

﴿ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا ﴾

And He said: "Do you marvel at this discourse, and do you laugh and do you not weep, while you make merry?" (An-Najm 59-61)

﴿ أَفَمِنْ هَٰذَا الْحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ ۝ وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ ۝ وَأَنتُمْ سَامِدُونَ ﴾

And he (Muhammad) said: There is no believing creature whose eye drops a tear-even if it were like the head of a fly through fear of Allah, and then it drops on some part of his cheek, but that Allah has precluded him from the Fire. And he said: When the heart of a believer trembles because of the fear of Allah, his sins are stripped from him, just as a tree is stripped of its leaves. The Fire will not penetrate to anyone who weeps for fear of Allah, until the milk returns to the udder.

And 'Uqbah Ibn 'Amir said: What is salvation O Messenger of Allah? He said: Keep a rein on your tongue, keep to your house and weep for your sins. And `A'ishah said: I said: O Messenger of Allah, will anyone of your community enter the Garden irrespective of desert ? He said: Yes, he who recollects his sins and weeps. He said: There is no drop more beloved of Allah than a tear-drop which is for fear of Allah, or a drop of blood which is shed in the `path' of Allah. He said: O Allah furnish me with moist eyes which cure through the shedding of tears, before the tears become blood and the stones live coals. And he said: Allah will give them shade seven times on a Day when there will be no shade but His shade, and will remember among them the man who has remembered Allah in private and whose eyes have overflowed with tears.

Abu Bakr , the *Sincere,* said: Whoever is able to weep let him weep and whoever is not able to weep let him pretend to weep. It was customary with Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir when he wept to wipe his face and beard with his tears and to say: I have heard that the Fire will not consume a place which tears have wiped. And Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-Āṣ said: Weep and, if you cannot weep, pretend to weep, for by Him in whose hand my soul is, if one of you possessed knowledge, he would cry out until his voice was cut off and would pray until his back was broken. Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: No eye fills up with its water but that neither dearth nor abasement will overtake the face of its master on the Day of Resurrection. For, if his tears flow, Allah will extinguish with their first drop oceans of fire. And should one man in a community weep, that community would not be punished. And Abu Sulaiman said: Weeping is on account of fear and hope, and delight on account of yearning. And Ka'b Al-Ahbar said: By Him in whose hand my soul is, because I weep for fear of Allah until the tears overflow my cheeks, I commend myself more than if I were to give supererogatory alms of a mountain of gold. And 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Amr said: Because I weep a tear for fear of Allah, I commend myself more than if I should give supererogatory alms with a thousand dinars.

And it is related concerning Hanzalah that he said: We were with the Messenger of Allah “Allah's blessing and peace be upon him” and he preached us a sermon by which our hearts were made tender and our eyes moist and we 'knew' ourselves. Then I returned to my family and my wife drew near to me and mundane conversation flowed between us, and I forgot what had occupied our minds in the presence of the Messenger of Allah “Allah's blessing and peace be upon him”, and we were taken up with this present world. Then I recollected what it was that had occupied our thoughts and I said within myself: I have

played the hypocrite in that the fear and impressionableness that possessed me have passed away. So I went out and began to shout : Hanzalah is a hypocrite. And Abu Bakr, the *Sincere,* met me and said: No, Hanzalah has not played the hypocrite. Then I entered the presence of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", while I was saying: Hanzalah is a hypocrite. So the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: No, Hanzalah has not played the hypocrite. So I said: O Messenger of Allah we were with you and you preached us a sermon by which our hearts were made fearful and our eyes tearful and we 'knew' ourselves. Then I returned to my family and we were engaged in mundane conversation, and I forgot what engaged our minds when we were with you. So he said: O Hanzalah, would that you were always in that state, then the angels would take you by the hand on your journeyings and where you lie down, but, O Hanzalah, everything has its appointed time.

Therefore everything which constitutes the merit of hope and weeping and piety and abstinence and knowledge, and the guiltiness of fancied security, is a pointer to the merit of fear, because all of these are related to it either by way of cause or effect.

Exposition That The Optimum Is The Dominance Of Fear Or The Dominance Of Hope Or The Two In Equilibrium

Know that the traditions concerning the merit of fear and hope are legion, and often the observer will inspect the two of them and doubt will overwhelm him as to which of the two is the higher good. The person who says: Is fear or hope the higher good?, asks a spurious question which resembles the question: Is bread or water the higher good? The answer to it is to say that bread is the higher good for the person who is hungry and water for the person who is thirsty. And, if both are present in union, one has regard to which is the more dominant, and, if it is hunger, bread is the higher good and, if it is thirst, water is the higher good. If they are in balance, bread and water are on par. This is so because everything which is willed in reference to a goal has its merit disclosed in relation to its goal, not to itself. And fear and hope are therapies by means of which hearts are cured and their respective merits are in proportion to the extant disease. For, if what has dominion over the heart is the disease of fancied security from the stratagems of Allah and being self-deceived thereby, fear is the higher good. And, if the most dominant factors are hopelessness and a despairing of the mercy of Allah, hope is the higher good. Similarly, if disobedience has mastery over the creature, fear is the higher good.

And it is allowable to say absolutely that fear is the higher good, in the sense that it is said: Bread is a higher good than oxymel, since the sickness of hunger is treated with bread and that of jaundice with oxymel, and the disease of hunger is more dominant and frequent, so that the need of bread is the more frequent, and so it is the higher good. And, in this sense, the dominance of fear is the higher good, because disobedience and self-deceit are the more dominant over the creature. And, if one looks at the source of fear and hope, hope is the higher good, because it is an outlet from the sea of mercy, and the outlet of fear is from the sea of wrath. And whoever is attentive to those

attributes of Allah which decree kindness and mercy, love will dominate him and there is no station beyond love. With regard to fear its prop is a turning towards those attributes which decree severity and love does not mingle with it as it does with hope.

In sum, it is proper to employ in reference to whatever is willed for other than itself the expression *more salutary* and not the expression *more meritorious.* So we say: For the most of people fear is more salutary than hope, and that, because of the dominance of disobedience. As for the pious person who has forsaken sin, outward and inward, concealed and open, what is most salutary is that his hope and fear should be in equilibrium. For that reason it was said: If the fear and hope of the believer were weighed, they would balance each other. And it is reported that `Ali said to one of his children: Fear Allah with such a fear as will make you see that, if you brought Him the good deeds of (all) the people of the earth, He would not accept them from you; and hope in Allah with such a hope as to make you see that, if you brought Him the evil deeds of (all) the people of the earth, He would pardon you for them. Hence `Umar said: If it were proclaimed: Let everybody except one man enter the Fire, I should hope that I was that man. And, if it were proclaimed: Let everyone enter the Garden except one man, I should fear that I was that man. And this is an explanation of the object of fear and hope and their being in equilibrium, notwithstanding dominance and mastery, by means of counterpoise and equalization.

And so with a person like `Umar it is fitting that his fear and hope should be on par. As for the disobedient man, when he supposes that he is the person who is excepted from those who are commanded to enter the Fire, that is a pointer to his self-delusion. And, if you say: It is not fitting with a person like `Umar that his fear and hope should be on par. No, it is fitting that his hope should be dominant (as above, in the first part of the *Book of Hope)* and that its strength should be in proportion to the strength of the means to it, as was illustrated by the sowing and the seed. And it is known that whoever sows healthy seed in clean ground and perseveres in cultivating it, and fulfils all the conditions of agriculture, the hope of attainment dominates his heart, so that his fear is not on par with his hope, and it is proper that the states of the pious should be such.

Know therefore that whoever picks up 'knowledge' from verbal expressions and parables multiplies his error, and that is so, even if we have cited a parable to him. So what we were dealing with is not comparable in every respect, since the cause of the dominance of hope was the knowledge which is the result of experience. For he knew by experience the health of the soil and its cleanness and the health of the seed and the salubriousness of the atmosphere and the paucity of lethal thunderbolts in that area and so on. For the parable of our proposition would be a seed whose species has not been tried, which has been scattered on unfamiliar soil, which the sower has not prepared nor tested, in a country where he does not know whether thunderbolts are frequent or not. And with such a sower as this, even if he exerts himself to the utmost and fulfils all that is in his

power, his hope will not be dominant over his fear.

And the seed in our proposition is faith and the conditions of its health are minute. And the soil is the heart whose hidden and open vices derive from concealed polytheism and hypocrisy and apostasy, and its hidden properties are beneath the surface. And the blights are lusts and blandishments of this world and the turning of the heart towards them in the future. And, even if he is safe at the moment, that is on account of what he can not verify and does not 'know' by experience, since it may chance from causes whose succession he cannot comprehend and whose like he has not experienced.

And the thunderbolts are the terrors of the pangs of death, and the disturbance of belief in its presence, and that belongs to those things whose like he has not experienced. Then the Reaping and the Result at the moment of the departure from the Resurrection to the Garden, and that he has not experienced. So whoever 'knows' the essentials of these matters, if he were faint-hearted and cowardly in himself, his fear would indubitably dominate his hope, as it will be related concerning the states of those who feared among the Companions and the Followers. And, if he were stouthearted and of a steadfast nature and complete in 'knowledge', his fear would be on par with his hope. As for the suggestion that his hope would be dominant, this should not be entertained.

And `Umar was in the habit of going over the score in the examination of his heart. So he used to ask Hudhaifah whether he knew of any traces of hypocrisy in him, since the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" had made him (Hudhaifah) a specialist in the science of hypocrites. For who is the person who is able to purify his heart from the hidden things of hypocrisy and latent polytheism, and, if he has secured the cleansing of his heart to the exclusion of that, how will he be secure from the stratagems of Allah in confusing him as to his state and hiding his defects from him? And, if he is confident about this, whence can he be confident about his being preserved in that condition, until the completion of the goodness of the Seal ?

And he (Muhammad) said: Let a man do the works of the People of the Garden for fifty years, so that only a span remains between him and the Garden (and, in a variant, only the time between two milkings of a she-camel), then the Book will predestinate and seal him with the work of the People of the Fire. And the interval between two milkings of a she-camel does not allow the possibility of an action with the members, It is no more than the duration of a fleeting impulse which penetrates the heart at death and decrees the Seal of evil, and how can one be secure from that ?

So the most ultimate objective of the believer is that his hope and fear should be in equilibrium, and the dominance of hope with the most of people would be a leaning on self-deceit and a dearth of 'knowledge'. For this reason Allah has united both of them in the description of the persons whom He has eulogized. For He said: "They invoke their Lord through fear and yearning." (As-Sajdah 16)

﴿ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ﴾

And He said: "They invoke Us through yearning and awe." (Al-Anbiya' 90)

﴿ وَيَدۡعُونَنَا رَغَبٗا وَرَهَبٗاۖ ﴾

And where is the like of `Umar? So what is most salutary for the people who are alive at this time, all of them, is the dominance of fear, with the proviso that it does not bring them to hopelessness and abandonment of action, and severing of the yearning for pardon, for that would be a cause of shirking work and a summons to obstinate persistence in disobedience. For that is despair and not fear, since fear is that which provides an incentive for action and blackens all the lusts, and snatches the heart away from reliance on this world, and summons it to withdraw from the home of self-deceit. This is commendable fear; it is not a passing impulse of the soul which does not take effect in restraint and incentive. Nor is it hopelessness which decrees despair.

So Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: Whoever serves Allah with undiluted fear is drowned in a sea of reflection. And whoever serves Him with undiluted hope goes astray in a desert of self-deceit. And whoever serves Him with fear and hope is established in a highway of recollection. And Makhul of Damascus said: Whoever serves Allah with fear is a Kharijite , and whoever serves Him with hope is a Murjite, and whoever serves Him with love is a free-thinker , and whoever serves Him with fear and hope and love is a Unitarian. Therefore these three conditions cannot but be united, and the dominance of fear is most salutary, except at the point of death. At death the dominance of hope and optimism are the most salutary, because fear has the effect of the whip which urges to action, and the time of action has passed away, and so the person who is at the point of death has no power over action. Then the means of fear do not avail, for they cut the sinews of his heart and assist the hastening of his death.

But the breath of hope strengthens his heart and commends to him his Lord towards whom is his hope; and it is not expedient that anyone should leave this world except out of love for Allah, in order that he may be desirous of meeting with Allah. For whoever desires to meet with Allah, Allah desires to meet with him, and hope joins him to love. So whoever hopes for this magnanimity is beloved, and the goal of all sciences and actions is 'knowledge' of Allah, so that 'knowledge' produces love. For the trend is towards Him and the advance at death is towards Him, and the joy of him who advances towards his Beloved is great in proportion to his love, and whoever abandons his Beloved has his tribulations and punishment intensified.

Wherever the heart is dominated at death by love of family and children and wealth and dwelling and estates and friends and companions, all the things which this man desires are in this world and so this world is his Garden, since the Garden is an expression for the territory which unites all that is desired. Hence his death is an exit from the Garden and the placing of an obstacle between him and what he desires, and there is no concealing the state of the man who has had an obstacle placed between him and what he desires. And, if he had no object of desire but Allah and the recollection of Him and 'knowledge' of Him and reflection on Him, this world and its ties would be a distraction to him to the

exclusion of the Beloved. So this world is a prison, because a prison is an expression for the place which obstructs the imprisoned from being refreshed by the things desired, and so his death is an advance towards his Beloved and is salvation from the prison; and there is no concealing the state of the man who has escaped from the prison and is closeted with his Beloved without obstruction or alloy.

This is the first reward and punishment which everyone who leaves this world consequent on death will meet, exclusive of what Allah has prepared for His creatures who are sound in faith, of those things which the eye does not see nor the ear hear, nor has it occurred to the heart of man; and exclusive of what Allah has prepared for those who love the life of this present world in preference to the next world, and are satisfied with it and feel secure in it from bonds and chains and manacles and blows of disgrace and chastisement. So let us ask Allah to bring us to die as Muslims and to annex us to the sound in faith. And there is no hope of an answer to this petition except by the acquisition of the love of Allah, and there is no path to it except by the expulsion of other than Allah from the heart and the severing of ties from all that is other than Allah from rank and wealth and country.

What is most fitting is that you should make petition as the Prophet did, when he said: O Lord furnish me with Your love and the love of whoever loves You, and the love of whatever brings me near to Your love and makes Your love more beloved to me than cold water. And the conclusion to be drawn is that the dominance of hope is more salutary at death, because it is most conducive to love; and the dominance of fear is more salutary before death, because it best kindles the fire which burns up lusts, and best chokes the love of this world out of the heart. And, for that reason, he (Muhammad) said: Let not one of you die except he supposes the best of his Lord. And He said: I identify Myself with what My creature supposes of Me, so let him suppose of Me what he will. And, when death was present with Sulaiman at-Taimi, he said to his son: O my son, tell me about the indulgences of Allah and remind me about hope, so that I may meet Allah supposing the best of Him. Similarly when death was present with Ath-Thawri and his pangs were intensified, the Scholars gathered around him lending him hope. And Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said to his son at death: Remind me of the traditions which have hope and optimism in them. And the goal of all that was that he should commend Allah to himself.

And thus Allah revealed to David: Commend Me to My creatures. And he said: In what way ? He said: By your recollecting to them My benefits and bounties. Therefore ultimate bliss is that one should die loving Allah and love is attained only through 'knowledge' and through the expulsion of the love of this world from the heart, so that the whole world is like a prison which denies access to the Beloved. Hence one of the sound in faith saw Abu Sulaiman ad-Darani in a vision and he was air-borne. So he questioned him and he (Abu Sulaiman) said: Now I am escaping. And, when he (one of the sound in faith) awoke in the morning, he asked after him, and it was said to him: Truly he died yesterday.

CHAPTER 5

EXPOSITION OF REMEDY BY WHICH STATE OF FEAR IS OBTAINED

It should be known that what we have mentioned concerning the therapy of patience and have expounded in *The Book of Patience and Gratitude* will suffice for this purpose, because patience is only possible after the attaining of fear and hope, since the first of the stations of religion is assurance which is an expression for strength of faith in Allah and the Last Day and the Garden and the Fire. And this assurance necessarily excites fear of the Fire and hope of the Garden, and hope and fear fortify patience. For the Garden has been enclosed with abhorrent things, and no one has patience to endure them except through the strength of hope. And the Fire has been surrounded with lusts and no one has patience to quench them except through the strength of fear. And, for this reason, `Ali said: Whoever longs for the Garden is diverted from lusts, and whoever guards against the Fire recoils from things forbidden,

Then the station of patience, which is derived from fear and hope, gives access to the station of spiritual combat and exclusive devotion to the recollection of Allah and constant reflection on Him. And constant recollection gives access to intimacy and constant reflection to the perfection of 'knowledge'. And perfection of 'knowledge' and intimacy give access to love and the station of satisfaction and trustfulness, and the remainder of the stations follow it. And this is the order of ascent of the stages of religion; and no station can succeed the root of assurance except fear and hope, and only patience can succeed these two, and accompanying it is spiritual combat and utter devotion to Allah outwardly and inwardly. And for the person to whom the way has been opened up there can be no station after spiritual combat except guidance and 'knowledge'. And only the station of love and intimacy can succeed 'knowledge', and following necessarily on love is satisfaction with the action of the Beloved and confidence in His care which is trustfulness.

Therefore what we have mentioned concerning the regimen of patience is sufficient, but we shall single out fear particularly in a summing-up and shall say: Fear gives access to two diverse ways, one higher than the other. And its parable is that, if a youth were in a house and a lion or snake came into him, he would probably not be afraid and would stretch out his hand towards the snake that he might take hold of it and play with it. But, if his father were with him, since he is knowledgeable, he would be afraid of the snake and would flee from it. And, if the lad should look at his father while he was trembling and was making to flee because of it, he would be identified with him and fear would conquer him and he would accompany him in flight. So the fear of the father is on account of insight and 'knowledge' of the attributes of the snake and its poison and its particular characteristics; and the might of the lion and its violence and lack of concern. And the fear of the son and his faith are entirely attributable to authority, because he thinks well of his father and knows that he is not afraid except on account of what excites fear in itself; and so he knows that the lion is a threat, but he does not 'know' the cause of it. And, if you 'know' this parable,

note that the fear of Allah is on two planes. One is fear of His punishment and the second is fear of Him.

With respect to fear of Him it is the fear of the Knowledgeable and the Spiritual Directors; of those who know such of His attributes as decree awe and fear and caution; of those who scrutinize the inner secret of His saying: Allah warns you (to remember) Himself. (Al Imran 28)

﴿ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسَهُۥ ﴾

And His saying: "Fear Allah with the fear which is His due." (Al Imran 102)

﴿ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ ﴾

With respect to the first it is the fear of the rank and file of the people, and is a product of the root of faith in the Garden and the Fire, and that they are respectively the rewards of obedience and disobedience. And its weakness is due to negligence and weakness of faith. And negligence can only be erased by recollection and preaching and tenacious reflection on the terrors of the Day of Resurrection and the classes of punishment in the next world. And it is erased also by observing those who fear and sharing their company and through the vision of their states. And, if sight should fail, hearing will not be sealed off from receiving impressions. With regard to the second it is higher, because it is Allah Himself who inspires fear. I mean that the creature both fears being veiled from Him and hopes for nearness to Him. Dhu 'l-Nun said: The fear of the Fire in comparison with the fear of alienation is like a drop which is shed in a fathomless sea. And this is the fear of the Knowledgeable according as He said: "Only the knowledgeable among His creatures fear Allah." (Fatir 28)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ﴾

But the rank and file of the believers also have a portion of this fear, but it rests exclusively on authority. It is also the fear which the lad had of the snake on the authority of his father which does not rest on insight and is indubitably weak and soon fades away. So that the lad may chance to see the snake-charmer approach and take hold of the snake, and may observe him and be deceived by him and venture to take hold of it in imitation of him, just as he recoiled from taking hold of it in imitation of his father. And tenets which rest on authority are, for the most part, weak, except when they are strengthened by the sight of the means to them which constantly reinforce them, and by perseverance in what they decree so as to multiply acts of obedience and avoid acts of disobedience unremittingly over a long period.

Therefore whoever ascends to the apex of 'knowledge' and 'knows' Allah, fears Him of necessity, and has no need of the regimen which induces fear; just as whoever 'knows' the lion and sees himself falling into its claws has no need of the regimen which will induce fear in his heart. No, he fears it of necessity, whether he wills it or not. Hence Allah revealed to David: Fear Me as you fear the harmful lion. And there is no device for inducing fear of the harmful lion except 'knowledge' of the lion and 'knowledge' of falling into its claws, and there is no need of any device besides it. So whoever 'knows' Allah 'knows' that He

does what He wills and does not care, and legislates as He desires and is not afraid. He brought the angels near without prior merit, and He banished the Devil irrespective of the question of previous sin. More, His character is as His saying has explained it: These are in the Garden and I do not care, and these are in the Fire and I do not care. And, if it occurs to your mind that He does not punish except on account of disobedience, nor reward except on account of obedience, consider that He has not furnished the obedient man with the means of obedience, so that he is obedient whether he wills it or not; and He has not furnished the disobedient man with the motives of disobedience, so that he is disobedient whether he wills it or not. And, whenever he creates negligence and lust and power to fulfill the lust, the action follows on them of necessity. For, if He alienated a person because he was disobedient to Him, and did not incite him to disobedience, was this because of a prior disobedience? In which case there is an infinite regress; or else it comes to a halt, doubtless, at a first principle which is uncaused from the point of view of the creature. No; it was decreed for him from all eternity.

And he (Muhammad) explained the meaning of this when he said: Adam and Moses had an argument concerning their Lord, and Adam had the better of the argument. Moses said: You are Adam whom Allah created with His hand and into whom He breathed of His breath. And He made the angels do obeisance to you and he made you a resident of His Garden. Then you caused the people to fall to the earth through your sin. And Adam said: You are Moses whom Allah chose for His Apostolate and His Word and gave you the Tablets on which were an exposition of everything. And He brought you near as one noble-born. By how many years did you find that Allah wrote down the Law before I was created? Moses said: By forty years. Adam said: And did you find in it: "And Adam disobeyed his Lord and was led astray ?" (Ta Ha 121)

﴿ وَعَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ رَبَّهُۥ فَغَوَىٰ ﴾

He said: Yes. He said: Do you then blame me because I performed an action which Allah had inscribed against me before I did it and forty years before He created me ? Thus Adam out-argued Moses.

And whoever 'knows' the cause in this matter with a 'knowledge' which stems from the light of guidance belongs to the *elite* of the Gnostics; to those who scrutinize the secret of predestination. And whoever hears this and believes in it and affirms its truth solely on the strength of what he has heard, belongs to the rank and file of the believers. And everyone in both of these groups is affected by fear. For every creature is as one falling into the clutch of predestination, just as the weakly youth who falls into the claws of the lion. And the lion may chance to be heedless and leave him alone; and it may pounce on him and maul him and that is regulated by what is contingent. Connected with this contingency are causes which are graduated in proportion with how much is known. But, when it (the contingency) is related to one who does not know it, (the cause) it is called contingency. And, if it is related to the knowledge of Allah, it is not permissible that it should be called contingency. As for the person who falls into the claws of the lion, if his 'knowledge' were perfect, he would not be afraid of the lion, since the lion is

coerced. If hunger dominates it, it will maul, and, if heedlessness dominates it, it will ignore and leave alone. So he would be afraid only of the Creator of the lion and His attributes. And I am not going to say that fear of the lion is a parable of fear of Allah. No; when the cover is withdrawn, it will be known that fear of the lion is the very fear of Allah, because the One who kills by means of the lion is Allah.

And know that the lions of the next world are like the lions of this world, and that Allah has created the means of punishment and reward, and has created for everyone a complement. The predestination which is a branch of the irrevocable and eternal decree drives him towards what is created for him. So He created the Garden and created for it a complement who are coerced by the means to it, whether they will it or not. And He created the Fire and created for it a complement who are coerced by the means to it, whether they will it or not. And no person sees himself in the buffeting of the waves of predestination but that fear of necessity dominates him. And these are the things concerning the secret of predestination which the Gnostics fear. And, if a persona is a party to a deficiency which precludes the ascent to the station of insight, his procedure is to treat himself with the hearing of the traditions and the reports, and to search out the states and sayings of the Gnostics who feared, and compare their intellect and rank with the rank of those who were self-deceived in their hoping. And there is no doubt that the imitating of them is most fitting, because they are the Prophets and Saints and Knowledgeable.

As for those who think themselves secure, they are the arrogant and ignorant and remiss. As for our Messenger, he is the Master of the first and the last, and he was of all men subject to the most intense fear. So that it is related that he was praying over an infant and that (according to one version) he was heard to say in his petition: O Allah, preserve him from the punishment of the grave and the punishment of the Fire. And (in a second version) that he heard someone saying: Congratulations to you, one of the sparrows of the Garden. And he was angry and said: How did you get to know that it is so ordered ? By Allah! I am the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and I have not ascertained what He will do with me. Truly Allah has created the Garden and has created for it a complement which may not be increased nor diminished. And it is related that he (Muhammad) said that also over the bier of `Uthman Ibn Maz'un, who was among the first of the Emigrants, when Umm Salamah said: May you enjoy the Garden! And Umm Salamah used to say thereafter: By Allah! I do not eulogize anyone after `Uthman. And Muhammad Ibn Khawlah Al-Hanafiyyah said: I do not ascribe merit to anyone except the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", not even to my father who begat me. And the Shiites' were roused against him and he began to mention the merits and attainments of `Ali.

And it is related in another account concerning a man belonging to the People of the Bench who died a martyr's death; whose mother said: Congratulations to you, one of the sparrows of the Garden. You emigrated to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and you were killed in the path of Allah. And he (Muhammad) said: And how did you get to know? Perhaps he conversed in what will not benefit him and proscribed what will not

injure him. And it is related that he (Muhammad) came into the presence of one of his Companions who was ill and he heard a woman saying: May you have the joy of the Garden! And he said: Who is this swearing by Allah? So the sick man said: She is my mother, O Messenger of Allah. So he said: And how did you get to know? Perhaps so and so conversed in what will not benefit him and was thrifty in what will not enrich him.

And how will every believer not be afraid when he (Muhammad) says: Hud and her sisters have made me gray-haired , i.e. Al-Waqi'ah, At-Takwir and An-Naba'. The Scholars said: Perhaps that refers to what is in the Surah of Hud according to His saying: "Lo! away with Āad, the people of Hud." (Hud 60)

﴿ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّعَادٍ قَوْمِ هُودٍ ﴾

And "Lo! away with Thamud ." (Hud 68)

﴿ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّثَمُودَ ﴾

And "Lo! away with Madyan as Thamud is far away." (Hud 95)

﴿ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّمَدْيَنَ كَمَا بَعِدَتْ ثَمُودُ ﴾

This, although he (Muhammad) knew that, if Allah had willed it, they would not have been polytheists, since, if it were His will, He would bring every soul its guidance. And in the Surah of Al-Waqi'ah: "None denies its taking place, abasing, exalting." (Al-Waqi'ah 2-3)

﴿ لَيْسَ لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ۝ خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ﴾

That is, the reed-pen is dry with things as they are fixed, and what is foreordained has come to completion, so that the event comes down, whether it be the abasing of a people who were exalted in this world, or the exalting of a people who were abased in this world. And in the Surah of At-Takwir are the terrors of the Day of Resurrection and the disclosing of the Seal, namely His saying: "When Hell will be set blazing, when the Garden will be brought near, a soul will know what it has brought forward." (At-Takwir 12-14)

﴿ وَإِذَا ٱلْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا ٱلْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ ۝ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أَحْضَرَتْ ﴾

And in the Surah of An-Naba': "The Day when man will see (the Deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the Unbeliever will say, "Woe unto me! Would that I were (mere) dust!"" (An-Naba' 40)

﴿ إِنَّآ أَنذَرْنَٰكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنظُرُ ٱلْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ ٱلْكَافِرُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى كُنتُ تُرَٰبًا ﴾

And His saying: "They will not speak except for him to whom the Merciful may give permission and who speaks aright." (An-Naba' 38)

﴿ لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ﴾

And the Qur'an from first to last is a source of dread to whoever reads it thoughtfully, and, if there was nothing in it except His saying: "But I am forgiving to whoever repents and believes and does what is righteous and at last is guided." (Ta Ha 82)

﴿ وَإِنِّى لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا ثُمَّ ٱهْتَدَىٰ ﴾

That would be sufficient, since He has made pardon dependent on four conditions to fulfill any one of which the creature is impotent. And more rigorous than it is His saying: But as for him "who repents and believes and does what is righteous, perchance he may be among those who prosper." (Al-Qasas 67)

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُفْلِحِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾

And His saying: "That He might question the truthful as to their truthfulness." (Al-Ahzab 8)

﴿ لِّيَسْـَٔلَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

And His saying: "We shall attend to you at leisure, you prominent beings!" (Ar-Rahman 31)

﴿ سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ ٱلثَّقَلَانِ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

And His saying: " Did they then feel secure against the Plan of Allah? But no one can feel secure from the Plan of Allah, except those (doomed) to ruin!" (Al-A'raf 99)

﴿ أَفَأَمِنُوا۟ مَكْرَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْقَوْمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ ﴾

And His saying: "Such is the grip of your Lord, when He takes hold of a town in its wrongdoing; surely His grip is painful, terrible." (Hud 102)

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَخْذُ رَبِّكَ إِذَآ أَخَذَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَهِىَ ظَٰلِمَةٌ ۚ إِنَّ أَخْذَهُۥٓ أَلِيمٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾ ﴾

And His saying: "The day We shall gather the righteous to (Allah) Most Gracious, like a band presented before a king for honours." (Maryam 85)

﴿ يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَفْدًا ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾

And His saying: "Not one of you but will pass over it: this is, with your Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished." (Maryam 71)

﴿ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾

And His saying: " Do what you will: verily He sees (clearly) all that you do." (Fussilat 40)

﴿ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ مَا شِئْتُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

And His saying: " To any that desires the tilth of the Hereafter, We give increase in his tilth; and to any that desires the tilth of this world, We grant somewhat thereof, but he has no share or lot in the Hereafter." (Ash-Shura 20)

﴿ مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُۥ فِى حَرْثِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِن نَّصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

And His saying: "Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it; and Whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it." (Az-Zalzalah 7-8)

﴿ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

And His saying: "And We shall turn to whatever deeds they did (in this life),

and We shall make such deeds as floating dust scattered about." (Al-Furqan 23)

﴿ وَقَدِمْنَآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَٰهُ هَبَآءً مَّنثُورًا ﴾

And His saying: " By (the Token of) Time (through the Ages), Verily Man is in loss, Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy." (Al-Asr 1-3)

﴿ وَٱلْعَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَفِى خُسْرٍ ۝ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ ۝ ﴾

So these are the four conditions of salvation from loss . And the fear of the prophets was (possible) only in association with the grace which overflowed to them, since they did not think themselves secure from the stratagems of Allah;" and only the people of perdition think themselves secure from the stratagems of Allah ." (Al-A'raf 99)

﴿ أَفَأَمِنُوا۟ مَكْرَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْقَوْمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ۝ ﴾

So that it is related that the Prophet and Gabriel were weeping for fear of Allah, and Allah revealed to both of them: Why do you weep, since I have made both of you secure? So they said: And who is secure from Your stratagems ? And it was as if both of them, since they knew that Allah Himself is the Knower of hidden things, and that He does not acquaint them with the ultimate goal of affairs, did not think themselves secured against His saying "I have made both of you secure" being a way of trying and testing them and plotting against them, so that, if their fear had been quietened, it would have been clear that they thought themselves secure from the stratagems and had not fulfilled their saying.

Similarly with Abraham who, when he was deposited in the missile, said: Bear me in mind, O Allah. And this was one of the great petitions. So he was tested and was joined by Gabriel in the air, so that he (Gabriel) said: Are you in need ? He said: Not of you. And that was a fulfillment of the significance of His saying: Bear me in mind, O Allah. And so Allah related of him saying: "And Abraham who fulfilled ." (An-Najm 37)

﴿ وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلَّذِى وَفَّىٰٓ ۝ ﴾

That is, what was entailed by his saying: Bear me in mind, O Allah.

And, as a parable of this, it is reported concerning Moses that, when he said: "Truly we are afraid that He may neglect us or be remiss, he said: Do not be afraid, surely I shall be with both of you, hearing and seeing." (Ta Ha 45-46)

﴿ قَالَا رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ أَن يَفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَآ أَوْ أَن يَطْغَىٰ ۝ قَالَ لَا تَخَافَآ ۖ إِنَّنِى مَعَكُمَآ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ۝ ﴾

And, in spite of this, when the magicians cast their spells, Moses quaked with fear within himself, because he did not feel secure from the stratagems of Allah, and he was confused over the affair until security was renewed to him, and it was said to him: "Fear not, surely you are the uppermost." (Ta Ha 68)

﴿ قُلْنَا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ ۝ ﴾

And, when the power of the Muslims was weak on the day of Badr , he (Muhammad) said: O Allah, if you kill this band, no one will remain on the face of the earth to serve You. And Abu Bakr said: Leave off badgering your Lord. Surely He will fulfill for you according as He has promised you. For he was at the station of the *Sincere,* the station of reliance on the promise of Allah. And the station of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was that of fearing the stratagems of Allah and it is the more complete, because it can derive only from perfection of 'knowledge' concerning the secrets of Allah and the concealed aspects of His actions and the meanings of His attributes which He expresses by such actions as derive from them by way of plotting.

And it is given to no human being to get to the bottom of the attributes of Allah. And, if a man 'knows' the essence of 'knowledge', and that his 'knowledge' comes short of getting to the bottom of affairs, his fear will indubitably be great. For that reason the Messiah said, when it was said to him (by Allah) : "Did you say to the people: 'Take me and my mother as gods apart from Allah'?: "Glory to You, what reason have I for saying what does not belong to me by right? If I did say it, You know it. You know what is in me but I do not know what is in You ." (Al-Ma'idah 116)

﴿ قَالَ سُبْحَـٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِىٓ أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِى بِحَقٍّ ۚ إِن كُنتُ قُلْتُهُۥ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُۥ ۚ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِى وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِكَ ۚ ﴿١١٦﴾ ﴾

And he said: "If You punish them they are Your servants: if You do forgive them, You are the Exalted in power, the Wise."" (Al-Ma'idah 118)

﴿ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾ ﴾

He (the Messiah) transferred the affair to the will and disassociated himself entirely from pronouncing as to his knowledge of it; because he had nothing to do with the affair, and because affairs are tied to the will with a connection which issues beyond the boundary of things intelligible and familiar, so that it is not possible to give a ruling on them by use of analogy or conjecture or opinion, *a fortiori* by verification and proof, and this is what the hearts of the Gnostics have grasped.

For the greatest catastrophe is the tie-up of your affair with the Will of One who has no concern for you, if He kills you. For He has killed the like of you, an innumerable company, and He is continually punishing them in this world with different kinds of torments and diseases, and, in addition, He makes their hearts diseased with unbelief and hypocrisy. Then He perpetuates their punishment to all eternity. So it is reported concerning Him that He says: "If We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance, but now is My saying realized: "Surely I shall fill Hell with jinn and men together ." (As-Sajdah 13)

﴿ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

And He said: "And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled: "I will fill Hell with jinns and men all together."" (Hud 119)

﴿ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ ﴾

And how can one fail to be afraid at that part of the saying which has been realized from all eternity, so that one may not yearn to attain to it? If the affair were undetermined, yearning would be of use in respect of it. But there is no alternative except to be resigned to it and to discriminate between the hidden things of predestination and the clear causes which are visible to the heart and members. And whoever has easy access to the means of evil has an obstacle between himself and the means of good, and his relationships are regulated from the side of this world; and so it is as if a disclosure were made to him by way of verifying the secret of predestination which predestined him as a reprobate. For, whenever easy access (to virtue) is created for him, (even if all the virtues are easily accessible and the heart is entirely cut off from this world and outwardly and inwardly set upon Allah) this decrees the lightening of fear, if the permanency of these circumstances is confidently assumed by him. But the peril of the Seal and the difficulty of safety fans into a blaze the fires of fear and it is not possible to extinguish them.

And how can the vicissitudes of circumstances offer security, while the heart of the believer is between two of the fingers of the Merciful, and the heart is violently overturned by the ferments of fate? And the Reverser of hearts has said: "Surely from their Lord's punishment none feels secure." (Al-Ma'arij 28)

﴿ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ ﴾

And the most ignorant member of the populace is he who thinks himself secure, while He is crying out a warning against fancied security. And were it not that Allah is gracious with His creatures the Gnostics, when He refreshes their hearts with the breath of hope, their hearts would be consumed with the fire of fear. So the means of hope are a mercy to the *elite* of Allah, and the means of negligence are, from one point of view, a mercy to the rank and file of the creatures. Since, if the cover were withdrawn, souls would perish and hearts would be cut off because of fear of the Reverser of hearts. And one of the Gnostics said: If a pillar were interposed between me and one whom I knew to be a Unitarian for fifty years and then he died, I would not conclude that he was a Unitarian, because I would not be cognizant with what had been made clear to him in respect of reversal. And one of them said: If the choice were between martyrdom at the door of the house, and death in Islam at the door of the room, I would choose death in Islam, because I do not know what may chance to my heart between the door of the room and the door of the house.

And Abu Ad-Darda' was in the habit of swearing by Allah: There is no one who thought himself secure because of his faith from being plundered by Allah at death, but He plundered him. And Sahl used to say: The fear of the *Sincere* at the evil of the Seal is present at every impulse and motion, and they are those whom Allah has described when He said: "And their hearts are quaking." (Al-Mu'minun 60)

﴿ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ ﴾

And, when Sufyan was at the point of death, he began to weep and be grief-stricken, and so it was said to him: O Abu `Abd Allah, keep hoping, for the

pardon of Allah is greater than your sins. So he said: Is it then because of my sins that I weep? If I knew that I should die a Unitarian, I would not be concerned should I meet Allah with sins the like of mountains.

And it is related concerning one of those who fear that he charged one of his brethren and said: When death is present with me, squat by my head. And, if you see me dying as a Unitarian, take hold of all that I possess and buy with it almonds and wine, and distribute it to the youths who inhabit the district, and say: This is the wedding-breakfast of one who has made good his escape. And, if I die in a state other than that of a Unitarian, acquaint the people to that effect, so that they be not deceived by the sight of my bier, so that whoever has most desire after insight may accompany my bier, to the end that dissimulation may not overtake me after death. He said: And by what token shall I know this? So he mentioned a mark to him. And he saw the mark of Unitarianism at his death, and so he bought wine and almonds and distributed them. And Sahl used to say: The novice fears lest he may be tried by disobedience, and the Gnostic fears lest he may be tried by unbelief. And Abu Yazid used to say: Whenever I repair to the mosque, it is as if a girdle were around my middle and I am afraid that it may lead me to the Church and the House of Fire, until I enter the mosque and the girdle is severed from me. And this happens to me five times every day.

And it is related concerning the Messiah that he said: O band of disciples, you are afraid of deeds of disobedience, and we of the band of the prophets are afraid of unbelief. And it is related in the traditions of the prophets that a prophet complained to Allah of hunger and lice and nakedness over a period of years, and his habit was that of a Ṣūfī. And Allah revealed to him: O my creature, are you not content that I have defended your heart from unbelief in Me, so that you ask Me for this world? So he took up dust, laid it on his head, and said: Yes, I am content, O Lord, defend me from unbelief. And, since the fear of the Gnostics, in spite of the imprints of their feet and the power of their faith, was on account of the evil of the Seal, how will the weaklings not fear it?

And the evil of the Seal has causes which come to the forefront as death approaches, such as modernism, hypocrisy and pride, and a host of reprehensible characteristics. Hence the fear which the Companions had of hypocrisy was intense so that Al-Hassan said: If I knew that I was innocent of hypocrisy, it would be more desirable to me than the place on which the sun rises. And what is meant in this connection is not the hypocrisy which is the contradiction of the root of faith. No, what is intended by it is the hypocrisy which unites with the root of faith, so that a Muslim is (at the same time) a hypocrite. And it possesses many marks. He (Muhammad) said: There are four ways in which a man may dissimulate and in each case he is a pure hypocrite, even if he prays and fasts and claims that he is a Muslim. And, if there is in him an offshoot of these practices, there is in him also a branch of hypocrisy, so that he abandons them. The man who, when he relates, falsifies; when he promises, is fickle; when he is relied on, is false; when he litigates, commits perjury. And (in another version): When he covenants is faithless. And the Companions and Followers have offered such an exegesis of hypocrisy that only the person who is *Sincere* is isolated from every detail of it. For Al-Hassan said: Surely hypocrisy is differentiated into secrecy and openness and tongue and heart and what goes in (to the heart) and what comes out. And who is the man who is isolated from these meanings?

More, these matters have become commonplace with men through custom, and it is forgotten that they are entirely abhorrent. More, that almost had the status of a covenant in the epoch of the Prophethood, and how is the supposition (otherwise) in our time? So that Hudhaifah said: Let a man but speak a word concerning the covenant of Allah and he will become thereby a hypocrite. Truly I hear it from each of you ten times a day. And the Companions of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say: Should you but do works that are more minute in your eyes than a hair, we would count them among the major deeds for the sake of the covenant of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". And one of them said: A mark of hypocrisy is that you dislike in other people that whose like you produce; and that you hanker after anything that is wrong; and that you loathe anything that is right. And it was said concerning hypocrisy: When he is praised for anything he does not have, that makes him pleased.

And a man said to Ibn `Umar: Truly we go in to these chiefs and we swear that they are truthful in what they are saying, and when we come out, we talk about them among ourselves. So he (Ibn 'Umar) said: We counted this hypocrisy in relation to the covenant of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". And it is related that he (Ibn `Umar) heard a man blaming Al-Hajjaj and tackled him and said: Is it the case that, if Al-Hajjaj were present, you would speak as you have spoken about him? He said: No. He said: We counted this hypocrisy in relation to the covenant of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". And more extreme than this is what is related how a certain party of men squatted at the gate of Hudhaifah, awaiting him, and they were conversing about some item of his business. And, when he came out to them, they were silent out of respect for him. So he said: Carry on with your conversation; and they kept silent. He said: We counted this hypocrisy in relation to the covenant of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him".

And the Hudhaifah in question had been specially endowed with the knowledge of hypocrites and the causes of hypocrisy. And he used to say: Surely there comes upon the heart an hour when it is filled with faith, so that there is not a needle's head of room for hypocrisy in it; and there comes upon it an hour when it is filled with hypocrisy, so that there is not a needle's head of room for faith in it. And you know by this that the fear of the Gnostics is on account of the evil of the Seal, and that its causes are the affairs which precede it. Among them are modernism and disobedience and hypocrisy. And when is the creature isolated from every detail of the sum of this? And, if he supposes that he is isolated from it, he is a hypocrite. For it is said: Whoever feels secure from hypocrisy is a hypocrite. And one Gnostic said to another: Truly, I fear for myself with respect to hypocrisy. And he said: If you were a hypocrite, you would not be afraid of hypocrisy. And the attention of the Gnostic constantly alternates between predestination and the Seal, for fear of both of them, and, for this reason, he (Muhammad) said: The believing creature is between two threats; the term which has run its course in respect of which he does not know what Allah is doing about it; and the term which is still in being in respect of which he does not know what Allah is decreeing for it. And by the One in whose hand is my soul, there is no one to crave boons from after death, and, after this world, there is no

dwelling-place but the Garden and the Fire. And Allah is the One of whom to ask help.

CHAPTER 6
EXPOSITION OF MEANING OF EVIL OF SEAL

And if you say: Surely the fear of many of the people goes back to the evil of Seal, so what is the meaning of the evil of seal?

It should be known that the evil of Seal has two degrees, one greater than the other. As for the major degree which most inspires dread, it consists in the fact that at the throes of death and the appearance of its terrors, the heart is dominated either by doubt or apostasy, and the spirit is snatched away when apostasy or doubt is the dominant state. And so what has gained ascendancy over the heart on account of the binding of apostasy is a veil between it and Allah forever. And that decrees alienation in perpetuity and everlasting punishment.

And the second and lesser degree is constituted by a man's heart being dominated at death by the love of some worldly affair and lust, and this is imaged in his heart which is swamped by it, so that, in that state, there is room for nothing else. Then the snatching away of his spirit chances to fall while he is in that state. For the swamping of his heart by it is the bending of his head towards this world and the inclining of his face to it. And whenever the face is averted from Allah, the veil is obtained, and whenever the veil is obtained, punishment is reached, since the blazing fire of Allah will only take hold of those who are veiled from Him. And as for the believer whose heart is secured from the love of the world and whose attention is directed towards Allah, the fire will say to him: Pass O believer, for your light has extinguished my flame. Whenever the snatching away of the spirit happens in a state when the love of the world is dominant, the affair is full of danger, because a man dies according as he lives. And it is not possible for the heart to acquire another characteristic after death which would contradict the characteristic which was dominant over it, since you cannot effect changes on the heart except by the actions of members, and the members have been made null by death, and so actions have also been nullified. So there is no hope of action and no hope of return to this world in order to make amends. In these circumstances the loss would be great were it not that the root of faith and the love of Allah, when they have been imprinted in the heart over a long period and have been reinforced by sound actions, erase from the heart this state which befell it at death. So, if the strength of a man's faith were up to a Mithqal, it would bring him out of the Fire in a short time; and, if it were less than this, his sojourn in the Fire would be lengthy; and, if it were no more than the weight of a seed, it would inevitably bring him out of the Fire, even if it were after thousands of years.

And if you say: What you have mentioned decrees that the Fire should speed to a person consequent on his death. What then is His purpose in delaying until the Day of Resurrection and procrastinating for the duration of this period? Know that whoever dislikes the punishment of the grave is a modernist who is veiled from the light of Allah and the light of the Qur'an and the light of faith.

More, what is sound in the opinion of men of insight is what the traditions correctly state, namely, the grave is either one of the pits of the Fire or the meadows of the Garden, and there may open on to the grave of one who is to be chastised seventy gates of Hell. According as the traditions have adduced his spirit will not leave him except emaciation has settled on him, if he has been made a reprobate with the evil of the Seal. And the kinds of punishment vary with the times, and so the interrogation of Munkar and Nakir takes place at the moment of being deposited in the grave and chastisement is after it. Then the exhaustive scrutiny in making up the account, and shame because of the company of those who testify to the Day of Resurrection. Then after that the peril of the Bridge and it consists in the fact that the Warders of Hell-to the end of what the traditions adduce in this connection.

And the reprobate will be incessantly revolving in all his states between the different classes of punishment, and in the sum of his states he will be chastised, unless Allah covers him with His mercy. And you should not suppose that the dust will consume the *locus* of faith. No; the dust will consume all the members and will scatter them until the Book reaches its term. Then the dismembered pieces will be collected and the spirit which is the *locus* of faith will be brought back to them. From the time of death until its return it has been either in the, crops of green birds which are suspended beneath the Throne, if it were blessed, or in a state which contradicts this if it were (may Allah defend us) reprobate.

And if you say: What then is the cause which leads to the evil of the Seal? Know that the enumeration in detail of the causes of these matters is not possible, but it is possible to indicate what they are in sum. With respect to the Seal which is on account of doubt and apostasy its cause is confined to two things. One of them can be envisaged along with complete abstinence and asceticism and perfect soundness of action, as, for example, the modernist who is an ascetic, for his latter end is perilous in the extreme, even if his actions should be sound. And I do not mean practice and so I say *modernism* (for an exposition of that would require a lengthy statement). No, I mean the modernism which a man believes in respect of the essence of Allah and His attributes and actions, contrary to reality. And so he believes Him to be the contrary of what He actually is, either through his opinion and intellect and observation by means of which he conducts disputation and on which he relies and by which he is self-deceived; or through his appropriation on authority from whoever possesses the state in question.

And when death draws near and the forelock of the Angel of Death [is] visible to him and his heart is confused by reason of what is in it, often the groundlessness of what he had believed through ignorance may be disclosed to him in the condition of the throes of death, since the state of death is that of the withdrawing of the cover and his throes have their origin in it. So a certain matter may thereby be disclosed to him, and, whenever he sees to be groundless what he had believed and concluded, of whose certainty he had been convinced within himself, he will not suppose within himself that he has erred in this tenet in particular, because of his having recourse in it to his pernicious opinion and deficient intellect. No, he will suppose that all he has believed is without root,

since he does not draw any distinction between his faith in Allah and His Messenger and the remainder of his sound tenets, and his pernicious tenets. Hence the disclosure that certain of his tenets derive from ignorance is a cause of making null and void the remainder of his tenets or of awakening his doubt in them. So, if the departure of his spirit chances to take place at that instant before he regains his steadfastness and returns to the root of faith, he is sealed with evil, and his spirit has gone out in a state of polytheistic belief (and Allah is our defence from that). And it is these things that are intended in His saying: "But there would appear to them from Allah what they had not been reckoning on." (Az-Zumar 47)

﴿ وَبَدَا لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ يَحْتَسِبُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ ﴾

And in His saying: "Say: 'Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers in their works, whose effort goes astray in this present life, though they think they are doing well'?" (Al-Kahf 103-104)

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَـٰلًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾

And just as there may be disclosed in sleep what will be in the future and that is because of the lightening of the cares of the world from the heart, similarly certain matters are disclosed in the throes of death, since the distractions of the world and the lusts of the body are the things which obstruct the heart from observing the Kingdom and scrutinizing what is in the Preserved Tablet, so that things as they are might be disclosed to it. And so the like of this state is a cause of disclosure, and disclosure is a cause of doubt concerning the remainder of the tenets. And anyone who believes anything in respect of Allah and His attributes and actions the contrary of what actually is, whether on authority or by observing opinion and intellect, is in this danger, and asceticism and soundness of action will not suffice to repel this danger. No, only belief in what is real will afford safety from it.

And the simple folk are far from this danger. I mean those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Last Day with a comprehensive and firmly-rooted faith, such as the Bedouin and the negroes, and the rest of those common folk who have not waded into research and enquiry nor wallowed in systematic theology as if it were an absolute standard of reference. Nor have they inclined to the different kinds of systematic theologians, accepting on authority their divergent sayings; and, for that reason, he (Muhammad) said: The majority of the people of the Garden are simple folk. And, for that reason, the Fathers proscribed research and enquiry and the wading into systematic theology and the examination of these matters. And they commanded the people that they should restrict themselves to believing in what Allah has revealed in its totality and to what has come from meanings that are plain, along with its affirmation that analogy should be disowned. And they forbade them to wade into allegorical exegesis, because the danger involved in research into the attributes of Allah is great, and its ascents are steep and its paths are rugged, and the intellect comes

short of attaining to the majesty of Allah. And the guidance of Allah with the light of assurance is veiled from human hearts according as they bear the inborn impress of the love of the world.

And what the researchers have mentioned by means of the display of the wares of their intellects is a source of confusion and contradiction, for hearts are familiar with what has been inculcated into them at the beginning of their development and are attached to it. And the feud-promoting factions which occasion bloodshed among the people are nails which reinforce tenets inherited and appropriated with good hopes from teachers at the beginning of the affair. Then there are men of such a stamp that they are infatuated with the love of the world and turn to it, appropriating the lusts of the world and their strangleholds and swerving from completeness of reflection. Thus when the door of systematic theology is opened up in respect of Allah and His attributes by means of opinion and intellect, in spite of incompatibilities of temperament in people and differences in their make-up, and so every ignorant person among them is eager to claim perfection, or that he has encompassed the furthest reach of reality, their tongues go off with whatever chances to each of them. And that is attached to the hearts of those who incline to them and is consolidated through long familiarity with them, and the way of salvation is entirely blocked against them.

For the safety of the populace consists in their occupying themselves with sound actions and not becoming entangled with what is out with the limit of their capacity. But at the moment the rein is loose and rubbish is being disseminated and every *ignoramus* comes down on the side of what suits his nature, armed with supposition and conjecture, and believes it is science and proof and unadulterated faith; and supposes that whatever he alights on by the use of hypothesis and appraisal is established science and certainty itself. "And you shall surely know the truth of it after a time." (Sad 88)

﴿ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ نَبَأَهُۥ بَعْدَ حِينٍۭ ﴾

And it is fitting that it should be declaimed concerning these people when the cover is withdrawn:

You were optimistic about the days when it was well with you,
And you did not fear the evil which fate brings;
And the nights made you feel safe and you were deceived by them,
For with clear nights comes the onset of murkiness.

Know for a certainty that everyone who forsakes the pure faith in Allah and His Messenger and His Book and wades into research has become entangled in this danger, and his parable is that of one whose ship is broken up, while he is in the buffetings of the waves, wave tossing him to wave; and it may happen that he will be cast on to the shore, but that is a remote possibility, and the probability is that he will perish. And everyone who alights on a tenet which he has caught from the researchers through the display of the wares of their intellects-whether along with the proofs which they have composed in their partisan squabbles or without the proofs-if he doubts it, he is corrupt in his religion, and, if he trusts in it, he is thinking himself secure from the stratagems of Allah, being self-deceived by his deficient intellect.

No person who wades into research can be disjoined from these two conditions, except when he has gone beyond the limits of the intellect to the light of disclosure which is the sunrise in the domain of Sainthood and Prophethood, and it is the purest gold in whatever way it may be facilitated. Only the simple folk among the commonalty are safe from this peril or those whose preoccupation is the fear of the Fire along with obedience to Allah, and so they have not waded into these superfluities, for this is one of the means which promotes the peril of the evil of the Seal.

As for the second cause, it is weakness of faith in the root; then the mastery of the love of the world over the heart. And whenever there is weakness of faith, the love of Allah is weak and the love of the world is powerful. So it comes to pass that in the proportion that there remains in the heart no place for the love of Allah, except in respect of a fleeting impulse, no trace of it is visible in the counteracting of appetite or in the avoidance of the way of Satan. And that produces an obstinate persistence in the following of lusts, so that the heart is darkened and hardened, and darkness of appetites is heaped up upon the heart and constantly extinguishes what it contains of the light of faith, because of its faintness, so that it (the heart) becomes rusty and corroded.

And, when the throes of death come, the weakness of that love is intensified in impotence, I mean the love of Allah, with reference to the terror of separation from this world which appears, since it is the object of desire which is dominant over the heart. So the heart is afflicted with the terror of being separated from the world, and sees that it is from Allah, and so its most inward occupation is the dislike of the power of death over it-and loathing of it in so much as it is from Allah. So he is afraid that it may arouse in his inner self a loathing of Allah in the place of love. Just as the person who loves his son with a weak love, when his son has seized his possessions which are dearer to him than his son and has consumed them, this weak love is turned into loathing. And, if the departure of his spirit should happen to fall at that instant in which he is affected by this impulse, then he has been sealed with evil and has perished with an everlasting death. And the cause which leads to a Seal like this is the dominance of the love of the world and reliance on it, and joy in the means to it, together with weakness of faith which determines the weakness of the love of Allah.

Hence whoever finds the love of Allah in his heart more dominant than the love of the world (even if he should be in love with the world also) is more remote from this danger. And the love of the world is the head of every sin and is the incurable disease, and includes in its scope different classes of people. And all of that is due to paucity of the 'knowledge' of Allah, since only he who 'knows' Him can love Him. And, in reference to this He said: " Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline; or the dwellings in which you delight - are dearer to you than Allah, Or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause - then wait until Allah brings about His decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious." (At-Tawbah 24)

﴿ قُلْ إِن كَانَ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلٌ ٱقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَٰرَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَٰكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَآ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَجِهَادٍ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ فَتَرَبَّصُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴾

Therefore everyone whose spirit is severed from him in a state when the impulse of distaste towards Allah was in his mind and the hatred of the action of Allah was visible in his heart in respect of its effecting a separation between him and his family and his wealth and the remainder of his objects of desire, his death will be an advance upon what he loathes and a separation from what he loves, and so he will advance upon Allah as would a runaway slave who is odious, when he is brought forward to his master by force. And there is no concealing what he deserves of chastisement and punishment.

As for him who dies in a state of loving Allah, he will advance upon Allah as would the well-doing servant who longs after his master; who has endured the difficulties of actions and the toils of journeyings out of a yearning to meet him. And there is no concealing the joys and delights which he will encounter simply from his reunion, apart from what he will merit in the way of kindnesses of preferment and new benefits.

As for the second Seal which is inferior to the first and does not decree eternal punishment in the Fire, it also has two causes. One of them is the multitude of acts of disobedience, even if faith should be strong. And the other is weakness of faith, even if acts of disobedience should be few. And this is so, since the cause of the committing of acts of disobedience is the dominance of lusts and their being rooted in the heart through much usage and custom. And the recollection of everything with which a man has familiarized himself during his life returns to his heart at death. And, if his inclination, for the most part, was to acts of obedience, what is present with him will, for the most part, be the recollection of obedience to Allah. And, if his inclination, for the most part, was to acts of disobedience, the recollection of these will dominate his heart at death. And his spirit may be snatched away when some worldly lust or act of disobedience is dominant, and his heart will be shackled by it, and so it will be veiled from Allah. So the person who commits sin only occasionally is more remote from this peril, and the person who does not commit sin at all is very remote from this peril. As for the person whom acts of disobedience dominate and are more numerous than his acts of obedience; whose heart is more rejoiced with them than it is with his acts of obedience-in his case this peril is very great.

We can 'know' this by means of a parable. It consists in the fact that it is no secret to you that a man sees in his sleep the sum of the states with which he has made himself familiar during the length of his life, so that he sees only what images the objects which he has seen in waking life. So that the adolescent who has a dream will not see the picture of sexual intercourse, since he has never had intercourse in his waking life. And, if he were to remain permanently in this condition, he would not see in his dream the picture of sexual intercourse. Then it is transparent that he who has spent his life in jurisprudence will see more of

the states that are related to the science and its practitioners than the merchant who has spent his life in trade. And the merchant will see more of the states which are related to trade and its means than the physician and the jurist, because what is manifest in the state of sleep is simply that to which there has obtained a relationship with the heart through length of familiarity or some other cause. And death resembles sleep but is beyond it. Nevertheless the throes of death and the swooning which precedes it are akin to sleep, and that decrees the recollecting of what is familiar and its return to the heart.

And one of the causes which is preponderant in effecting its recollection in the heart is length of familiarity, and so length of familiarity with acts of disobedience or obedience is also a preponderant factor. And, in the same way, the dreams of those who are sound in faith are the contrary of those of rakes, and so the dominance of what is familiar is the cause, because a vicious image is pictured in a person's heart and his appetite inclines towards it, and his spirit may be snatched away in this state, and that will be a cause of the evil of his Seal, even if the root of faith remains to the extent that it gives out hope of salvation from it (the Seal). And just as what occurs in waking life only does so because of a particular cause which Allah knows, in the same way every dream has a cause in Allah. Some of them we 'know', and others we do not 'know'. Just as we know that the sensation is connected from the object sensed to its correlative, whether in respect of resemblance or contrariety or contiguity, in the sense that it (the correlative) has impinged on the attention as a consequence of it (the object sensed). With regard to resemblance in that one looks at a beautiful thing and recollects another beautiful thing. With regard to contrariety in that one looks at a beautiful thing and recollects something foul and reflects on the extreme incongruity between the two of them. With regard to contiguity in that one looks at a horse which he has seen previously with a man and recalls that man. And the sensation may perhaps be connected from one thing to another without one knowing the *rationale* of its relationship, and that can be constituted only by one middle term and two middle terms.

As, for example, when there is a connection from one thing to a second thing and from it to a third thing. Then the second thing is forgotten and there is no relationship between the third and the first, but there is a relationship between the third and the second and the second and the first. In the same way the relationships of sensations which occur in dreams have causes of this kind, and similarly in the presence of the throes of death. And bearing on this and the knowledge which is with Allah is the person whose main occupation is tailoring, for you see him inclining his head as if he would take up his needle to sew with it, and moistening his finger which is practised with the thimble, and taking the garment from above him and appraising and measuring it as if he would address himself to the cutting of it, and then reaching his hand to the scissors. And whoever is desirous of curbing what is impressed on him so as to exclude any connection with acts of disobedience and lusts-there is no way open to him except lifelong combat to wean himself from them and to throttle lusts out of the heart. And this is the power which comes under choice, and long perseverance in virtue and isolation of reflection from evil are equipment and provisions against the state of the throes of death.

For a man dies as he has lived and is gathered to judgement as he has died, and, for that reason, it is related concerning a greengrocer that he was concentrating at death on the Two Words while he was saying five, six, four, and was preoccupied with counting with which he had long familiarity before death. One of the Gnostics among the Fathers said: The Throne is a jewel blazing with light, and the creature has no state but its image is impressed on the Throne according to the form which it possesses. And, when he is in the throes of death, the form of it is revealed to him from the Throne, and it may be that he will see himself in the form of disobedience. And, in the same way, it is disclosed to him at the Day of Resurrection, and he sees the states of his soul and shame and fear surpassing description take hold of him. And what he recollects accurately and is a cause of veracious dreams is akin to that.

For the sleeper attains to what is in the future from the scrutiny of the Preserved Tablet which is one of the departments of Prophethood. And thus the evil of the Seal has been traced back to the states of the heart and the transactions of impressions, and it is Allah who is the Reverser of hearts. And the contingencies which decree the evil of impressions do not entirely come under choice, even if length of familiarity should leave its mark on them. And, in this respect, the Gnostics have a massive fear of the evil of the Seal, because, if a man desires to see in his sleep nothing but the states of those who are sound in faith, and the states of acts of obedience and worship, that is hard for him, even if he possesses a great deal of soundness and perseverance by which he may effect it. But the confusions of fantasy are not wholly amenable to control, even if, for the most part, what appears in sleep has a relationship to what is dominant in waking life.

Thus I heard Shaykh Abu Ali Al-Farmadhi describing to me that good conduct towards his Shaykh was obligatory on a novice, and that there was not to be in his heart dissent from anything that he should say, nor, in his tongue, any disputation with him. So he said: I related to my Shaykh, Abu 'l-Qasim Al-Karmani, a vision which I had and I said: I saw you saying to me: Such and such. And I said: Not so. He continued: So he (the Shaykh) cut me off for a month and did not converse with me and said: Were it not that an excess of curiosity were within you and a dissent from what I am saying to you that would not have run upon your tongue in sleep.

And it is as he said, since a man rarely sees in his sleep the contrary of what dominates his heart in his waking life, and so this is the predestination of which we make large mention in the science of the operation of the secrets of the affair of the Seal. And what is beyond that comes under the science of disclosure. And it has been made clear to you by this that security from the evil of the Seal would consist in your seeing all things as they are in themselves without ignorance, and your being successful all your life in obeying Allah without disobedience. Consequently, if you know that that is absurd or difficult, the fear which prevailed over the Gnostics will inevitably prevail over you, so that your weeping and wailing will be prolonged on this account, and your grief and anxiety will be permanent because of it, just as we shall relate concerning the states of the prophets and the Fathers who were sound in faith, that it may be one of the

causes which will excite the fire of fear in your heart.

And you 'know' for certain by this that the actions of a lifetime are all perishable, if the best of which it partook is not secured within the soul at the exit of the spirit, and that its safety in company with the commotion of the waves of impressions is very dubious. And, for that reason, Mutarrif Ibn `Abd Allah used to say: Truly I do not wonder at the man who perishes how he perishes, but I wonder at the man who is saved how he is saved. And, for that reason, Hamid Al-Laffaf said: Whenever the angels bring up the spirit of a creature who is a believer and has died in (a state of) virtue and Islam, the angels wonder at him and say: How was this man saved from a world in which the best of us were corrupted? And Ath-Thawri was weeping on a certain day and it was said to him: What are you weeping about ? So he said: I have wept for my sins for some time and now I am weeping for Islam.

And, in sum, he whose ship chances on a fathomless sea with tempestuous winds assailing him and the waves in commotion is more remote from salvation than from perishing; and the heart of the believer is in a more intense commotion than the ship, and the waves of impressions have a greater impact than the waves of the sea. And the thing dreaded at death is simply the impression of an evil whose occurrence is unique and this is the thing of which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" spoke: Truly let a man do the work of the People of the Garden for fifty years, so that between him and the Garden there remains but the time between two milkings of a she-camel, then he will receive the Seal according as the Book has predestined. And the time between two milkings of a she-camel does not leave room for actions which determine his reprobation. No; it is the impressions which produce commotion and which are impressed with the speed of forked lightning. And Sahl said: I beheld as if I were ushered into the Garden and I saw three hundred prophets and so I asked them: What was the thing that caused you most fear in this world? They said: The evil of the Seal.

And, because of this great peril, martyrdom was coveted and sudden death detested. Sudden death, because it may happen along with the dominance of an evil impression and its mastery over the heart; and the heart is not isolated from the like of it, except it repels (it) through repugnance or the light of 'knowledge'. Martyrdom, because it is an expression for the snatching away of the spirit in a state when there remains in the heart nothing but the love of Allah, with the exit from the heart of the love of the world and family and wealth and children and every lust, since a man does not leap into the front-line disposing himself for death, except out of love to Allah and in the quest after the satisfaction which is from Him, exchanging his present world for his after-life and being satisfied with the bargain which Allah has made with him. For He said: "Allah has purchased from the believers their souls and goods at the price of their possession of the Garden." (At-Tawbah 111)

﴿ ۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةَ ﴾

And the seller has, no doubt, taken a dislike to the object sold, and the love of it is expelled from the heart and the exclusive love of the exchange

sought is in his heart. And the like of this circumstance may prevail over the heart in certain states, but the expiry of the spirit does not occur during them. And the front-line is a cause of the expiry of the spirit in a circumstance which resembles this. This is so in respect of whoever is not aiming at dominion and booty and renown for bravery. For whoever is in this state, even if he were killed on the battle-field, is remote from the like of this rank, as the traditions have indicated.

And, since the meaning of the evil of the Seal and its fearful character have been expounded to you, occupy yourselves in making ready for it and persevere in the recollection of Allah, and expel from your heart the love of the world, and guard your members against the doing of disobedience, and your heart from reflecting on it. And be vigilant against witnessing acts of disobedience and witnessing those who practise them with all your might, for that also will leave its trace in your heart and thoughts, and impressions will veer off towards it. And beware lest you procrastinate and say: I shall prepare for it, when the Seal comes, for every single breath is your Seal, since it is possible that your spirit may be snatched away in the course of it. So watch over your heart in every twinkling of the eye, and beware lest you neglect it for an instant and so that instant may be your Seal, since it is possible that your spirit may be snatched away in the course of it. This, as long as you are awake, and with regard to when you are asleep, take care not to go to sleep except in a state of outward and inward purity and that sleep overcomes you only after the dominance of the recollection of Allah over your heart. I am not saying over your tongue, for the movement of the tongue by itself is weak in its effect.

Know as conclusive that what dominates your heart at the moment of sleep is only what was dominant over it before sleep, and that nothing is dominant in the course of sleep which was not dominant before sleep, and that nothing is awakened from your sleep except what was dominant over your heart during your sleep. And death and resurrection resemble sleep and awakening. And as the creature does not go to sleep in a state other than that which was dominant over him in his waking life and is not awakened in a state other than that in which he was during his sleep, similarly a man dies as he has lived and is gathered (to judgement) as he has died. And it is conclusively verifiable and indubitable that death and resurrection are two of your states just as sleep and waking are two of your states. So believe in this, affirming its truth with the assent of the heart, if you are not a party to the seeing of it with the eye of certainty and the light of insight. And conserve your breaths and glances and see to it that you are not neglectful of Allah for the twinkling of an eye. For, if you do all that, you are, in spite of it, in great peril, and how, if you do not do it ? And all men are perishable except the theorists, and the theorists are all perishable except they are practitioners, and the practitioners except they are elect, and the elect are in great peril.

And know that this will not expedite for you what you have not satisfied from this world according to your necessity. And your necessity is food and clothing and dwelling, and the remainder, all of it, is superfluous. And the food which is necessary is what will straighten your back and support your

subsistence, and you must obtain it as a distasteful necessity, and your liking for it is not to be more than your liking for what your need decrees, since there is no distinction between inserting food into the stomach and its expulsion, and both are constitutional necessities. And just as what your need decrees is not something which occupies your concern and with which your heart is engaged, so the obtaining of food must not be part of your concern. And know that, if your concern is with what enters your stomach, your standard of value is what is expelled from your stomach. And, if your purpose in eating is nothing but piety in the worship of Allah, as is your purpose in what your need decrees, the mark of that appears in three matters. From what you eat, in respect of frequency, quantity and quality. With regard to frequency the least is that one should make do with a single meal during a day and night and should persevere in fasting. With regard to quantity that one should not exceed one third of the stomach's capacity; and with regard to quality that one should not seek after culinary pleasures. No; one should be satisfied with whatever chances (to be available). So, if you have power over these three items and the burden of lusts and pleasures falls off from you, you will have power thereafter to forsake equivocal items and it will be easy for you not to eat anything except what He has made permissible; for what is permitted is rare and does not fulfill all that is desired.

With regard to your clothing let your aim in respect of it be the repelling of heat and cold and the covering of nakedness, and everything that repels cold from your head, even if it be a cap worth a farthing. Your seeking other than this is superfluous to you and your time is wasted in it. It will entail for you constant labour and unremitting care in obtaining it, in acquiring on one occasion and yearning after on another what is forbidden and dubious. So take as your measurement in this matter that by which heat and cold are repelled from your body, and so everything which attains to the purpose of clothing. If you are not satisfied with it in the meagerness of its quantity and quality, you will have no halting-place nor point of return thereafter. No; you will be numbered with the man whose stomach nothing but dust will fill.

And similarly for a dwelling, if you are content with its purpose heaven will suffice you as a roof and the earth as a couch. For, if heat or cold overtakes you, there are mosques for you to shelter in. For, if you seek after a specific dwelling, it will be a long business for you, and the most of your life will be spent in it, and your life is your merchandize. Then, if you are prosperous, you will purpose that the wall should do more than afford you privacy and that the roof should do more than repel the rains, and so you will begin raising the walls and adorning the ceilings, and you will have been hurled into a chasm which it will take you a long time to climb out of.

And thus with all the necessary aspects of your affairs, if you confine yourself to them, you will have time to devote to Allah and will be able to lay in provisions for your after-life and to prepare for your Seal. And, if you go beyond the limit of what is necessary to the wadies of things desired, your concentration will be distracted and Allah will not be concerned in which wady He destroys you. So offer this advice to whoever is more in need of it than yourself.

And know that the space for estimating and provisioning and taking precautionary measures is this short life, so, if you defer it day after day in your procrastination or neglect, sudden death will snatch at a time other than you would wish, and your regret and repentance will never leave you. So, if you were not able to maintain contact with that towards which you were pointed through the weakness of your fear (since in what we have described of the affair of the Seal there was not sufficient to make you afraid), we shall cite for you concerning the states of those who fear what, we hope, will remove some of the hardness from your heart. For you will admit as true that the intellect of the prophets and saints and scholars, together with their actions and their status with Allah, were not inferior to your intellect and actions and status. So reflect on their states, in spite of your impaired insight and the defectiveness of the eye of your heart, why fear was intense within them and grief and weeping protracted in them, so that some of them would swoon, some be beside themselves, some collapse in a faint, and some fall to the ground dead. And it is nothing to wonder at, if that were to make no impression on your heart, for the hearts of the negligent are like stones or even harder, "for there are some stones from which rivers come gushing, and some have been split, so that water emerges from them, and some which crash down out of fear of Allah. Allah is not heedless of what you do." (Al-Baqarah 74)

﴿ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ

وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴾

CHAPTER 7

EXPOSITION OF STATES OF PROPHETS AND ANGELS IN RESPECT TO FEAR

A'ishah related that whenever the air was stirred and a tempestuous wind blew, the countenance of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" would alter and he would rise up and pace up and down the room and would go in and out. All that because of the fear of the chastisement of Allah. And he (Muhammad) Allah s blessing and peace be upon him recited a verse from the Surah of Al-Waqi'ah and then he swooned. And Allah said: "And Moses fell in a swoon." (Al-A'raf 143)

﴿ وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا ﴿١٤٣﴾ ﴾

And the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saw the form of Gabriel at Abtah , and fell in a swoon. And it is related that when he (Gabriel) engaged in prayer, there was heard in his breast a bubbling like that of a cauldron. And he (Muhammad) Allah s blessing and peace be upon him said: Gabriel never came to me but he was trembling because of his separation from the Almighty.

And it was said: When the news about the Devil was made public, Gabriel and Michael began to weep and Allah spoke in revelation to them both: What is the matter with the two of you that you are indulging in all this weeping? So they said: O Lord, we are not secure from Your stratagems. So Allah said: Thus it is,

you are not secure from My stratagems. And according to Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir who said: When the Fire was created, a troop of angels flew up from their places, and, when the sons of Adam were created, they returned. And according to Anas he (Muhammad) asked Gabriel: Why is it that I do not see Michael laughing? So Gabriel said: Michael has not laughed since the Fire was created. And it is said: Truly in Allah's service are angels none of whom has laughed since the Fire was created for fear that Allah would be enraged against them and would punish them for it.

And Ibn `Umar said: I went out with the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" until he entered one of the enclosures of the Helpers and began to pluck fruit from a palm tree and eat. So he said: O Ibn `Umar, why are you not eating? So I said: O Messenger of Allah, I do not desire it. So he said: But I desire it, and this is the fourth morning I have not tasted food nor found it; and, if I were to ask my Lord, He would give me the Kingdom of the Caesars and Khosraus. So how is it with you, O Ibn `Umar, since you have remained among a crowd who lay in their stocks for the year, while assurance is weak in their hearts? He (Ibn `Umar) said: And, by Allah, we did not stir nor rise up until it was revealed: "How many a beast bears not its own provision, but Allah provides for it and you! He is the One who hears and knows." (Al-Ankabut 60)

﴿ وَكَأَيِّن مِّن دَآبَّةٍ لَّا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا ٱللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴾

He said: So the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: Truly Allah has not commanded you to hoard up wealth nor to follow lusts. Whoever hoards dinars desires thereby the life that passes away, for life is in the hand of Allah. I most certainly will not hoard either dinars or Dirhams or lay up stocks for the morrow.

And Abu Ad-Darda' said that the bubbling of the heart of Abraham, the Friend of the Merciful, through fear of his Lord, was heard at the distance of a mile, when he engaged in prayer. And Mujahid said: David wept for forty days prostrate in worship, without lifting his head, so that the pastures sprouted because of his tears and his head was covered over. So he was addressed: O David, are you hungry? If so, you may eat. Are you thirsty? If so, you may drink. Are you naked? If so, you may be clothed. Then he wept so bitterly that he energized the lute, and he was burnt up with the heat of his fear. Then Allah revealed to him repentance and pardon and he said: O Lord, set my sin in my palm. So his sin was inscribed on his palm, and he did not extend his palm for food and drink or for any other purpose without seeing it, and it made him weep. He (the narrator) continued: And he was brought a bowl two thirds full, and, when he took it, he saw his sin, and would not put it to his lip until it overflowed with his tears. And it is told of him that he had not raised his head to heaven up till the time of his death out of reverence for Allah. And he used to say in his supplication: O Allah, when I recollect my sin, the earth, for all its breadth, hems me in, and, when I recollect Your mercy, my spirit is restored. Praise be to You O Allah, the physicians among Your creatures have come that they may nurse to health my sin, and they all point me to You. So may reprobation overtake them

who despair of Your mercy.

And Al-Fudail said: I have heard that David recollected his sin on a certain day and bounded away shrieking, with his hand laid on his head, until he reached the mountains. And the wild beasts gathered to him and he said: Return, I do not desire you. My only desire is for the person weeping because of his sin. So let no one confront me except weeping, and whoever is not a sinner let him not contrive sin for David. And he was chided for his prolific weeping and so he said: Leave me alone. I am weeping before the exit of the day of weeping, before the tearing apart of the bones and the burning of the intestines, and before the angels ordain severe penalties for me. They do not disobey Allah in respect of what He commands and they perform what they are commanded. And Abd-Al-Aziz Ibn Umar said: Whenever David committed a sin, his voice was diminished and he said: O Lord, my voice is hoarse among the pure voices of the *Sincere*. And it is reported that, whenever he wept for a long time and it did not benefit him, his power was straitened and his perplexity intensified and he would say: O Lord, will You not pity my weeping? And Allah revealed to him: O David, you have forgotten your sin and remembered your weeping. So he said: My Allah and my Master, in what way do I forget my sin ? And yet, when I recited the psalms, the running water desisted from its flow, and the blowing of the wind was stilled, and the birds furnished shade to my head, and the wild beasts were intimates at my palace. O my God and my Master, what then is this alienation which is between me and You? And Allah revealed to him: That was the intimacy of obedience and this is the alienation of disobedience. O David, Adam was one of My creatures. I created him with My hand and I breathed into him of My spirit and I made My angels do obeisance to him; and I clothed him in the robe of My preferment, and I crowned him with the unique crown of My dignity and image, and I gave him to wife Eve, My handmaid, and settled him in My Garden. He disobeyed Me, and so I expelled him from My precincts naked and abased. O David, listen to Me and I shall speak the truth. You obeyed Us and We obeyed you; you asked Us and We gave to you; and you disobeyed Us and We showed forbearance to you. And, if you return to Us in your former state, We shall receive you.

And Yahya Ibn Abu Kathir said: I have heard that it was David's custom when he desired to engage in weeping to pass the time for seven days beforehand neither eating food nor taking drink, nor approaching women. And, when it was a day beforehand, the pulpit was brought out to him to the desert, and he commanded Solomon to cry out with a voice that would cross the countryside and its environs of thickets and hills and mountains and deserts and monastic cells and churches And in it he proclaimed: Are there not those who desire to hear David's wailing for himself ? Let them then come along. He went on: And the wild beasts come from the deserts and the hills and the lions from the thickets and the reptiles from the mountains and the birds from the nests and the virgins from their bowers. And the people assemble for that day and David comes to ascend the pulpit, and the children of Israel surround him, and every kind according to its class surrounds him, and Solomon stands by his side.

So David launches into an encomium of his Lord and breaks into weeping and shrieking. Then he launches into the recollection of the Garden and the Fire, and the reptiles die together with a group of the wild beasts and the lions and the people. Then he launches into the terrors of the Day of Resurrection and into wailing over himself and a group of every class dies. And, when Solomon saw the large numbers of the dead, he said: O father, you have decimated your audience. They are all decimated and sections of the children of Israel and of the beasts and reptiles have died. So he launches into petition, and, while he is in this posture, one of the devotees of the children of Israel calls out to him: O David, you are over-hasty in seeking your reward from your Lord. He went on: And David falls in a swoon, and, when Solomon noted what had overtaken him, he brought a mattress and carried him on it. Then he commanded someone to call out: Is there not someone who had a friend or relative with David? Let him then bring a mattress and carry him off, for the recollection of the Garden and the Fire has killed those who were with him. So a woman would bring a mattress and would bear away her relative saying: O you whom the recollection of the Fire has killed. O you whom the fear of Allah has killed. Then, when David revived, he stood up and placed his hand on his head and entered his chapel and locked its door, saying: O Allah of David, are You angry with David? And he communed ceaselessly with his Lord. So Solomon arrives and squats at the door and asks for permission to come in. Then he enters and has with him a barley bannock and he says: O father, build up your strength with this according as you desire. So he eats of that cake what Allah wills and then he goes out to the children of Israel and is in their midst.

And Yazid Ar-Raqishi said: David went out among the people on a certain day to preach to them and inspire fear in them. And about forty thousand went out and thirty thousand of them died and only about ten thousand returned. He went on: And he had two slave girls whom he had appointed, so that, when fear came to him and he collapsed and was agitated, they squatted on his breast and legs for fear that his limbs and joints would be dismembered and he would die.

And Ibn `Umar said: John, the son of Zachariah , went into the Jerusalem temple (he was a lad of eight years) and looked at their devotees who were clad in shirts of hair and wool; and he observed their zealots who had bored through their clavicles and inserted chains in them, and fastened themselves to the extremities of the temple. And that filled him with awe. So he made to return to his parents and passed by two lads at play and they said to him: O John, come and play with us. So he said: Truly I was not created for play. He went on: So he came to his parents and asked them to clothe him in hair and they did so, and he returned to the temple, and served in it by day and kept the lamps trimmed by night, until he attained his fifteenth birthday.

Then he went out and haunted the lofty mountains and subterranean paths of the earth. So his parents went out in search of him and they overtook him by the river Jordan, and he had soaked his feet in the water until the thirst was almost killing him, saying the while: By Your Might and Majesty, I will not taste a cool

drink, until I know where I stand with You. So his parents asked him to breakfast on a barley bannock which they had with them and to drink some of that water. So he did it and made expiation for the breaking of his oath and commended filial piety.

Thus his parents brought him back to the temple, and, when he stood praying, he used to weep so that the trees and clods would weep with him, (and Zachariah would weep because of his weeping) until he (John) would go into a faint. And he would weep without remission so that the tears pierced the flesh of his cheeks and his molars were visible to the onlookers. So his mother said to him: O my son would that you would permit me to fetch for you something to cover up your molars from those who look on! So he gave her permission and she procured two pieces of felt and stuck them to his cheeks. So it came about that, whenever he got up to pray, he wept, and, when his tears saturated the two pads, his mother came to him and wrung them out ; and, when he saw his tears flowing over his mother's forearms, he said: O Allah, these are my tears and this is my mother and I am Your creature, and of those who are merciful You are the most merciful. So Zachariah said to him one day: My son, I have asked my Lord to bestow you on me, that my eyes might be refreshed with you. So John said: O my father, Truly Gabriel has reported to me that between the Garden and the Fire there is a desert which only those who weep will cross. So Zachariah said: O my son in that case weep on.

And the Messiah said: O band of disciples, the fear of Allah and the love of Paradise produce patience in the face of difficulty and keep you at a distance from the world. In truth I say to you: Surely the eating of barley and sleeping on middens with the dogs is a small price in the quest for Paradise. And it was said: Whenever the Friend recollected his sin, he went into a faint and the commotion of his heart would be heard for miles. Then Gabriel would come and say to him: Your Lord greets you with peace and says: Do I see a friend who fears his Friend? So he would say: O Gabriel, truly, when I recollect my sin, I forget my friendship.

So these are the states of the prophets and see to it that you reflect on them, for they are the most 'knowledgeable' of Allah's creatures concerning Allah and His attributes. May Allah's blessing be on them all and on all the creatures of Allah who are brought near. And our sufficiency is Allah and the grace of the Trustee.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EXPOSITION OF STATES OF COMPANIONS, THEIR FOLLOWERS AND THE RIGHTEOUS PREDECESSORS AND THOSE ENDUED WITH FAITH IN THE GRIP OF FEAR

It is related that Abu Bakr, the *Sincere,* said to a bird: Would that I were like you, O bird, and had not been created as human flesh. And Abu Dharr said: Would that I were a tree which is pruned. And Talhah said a similar thing. And `Uthman said: Would that, when I died, I were not raised. And `A'ishah said:

Would that I became a thing forgotten. And it is related that `Umar used to collapse in a faint through fear, whenever he heard a verse from the Qur'an and was restored after some days. And one day he took up a straw from the ground and said: Would that I were this straw; would that I did not remember anything; would that I were a thing forgotten; would that my mother had not borne me. And on 'Umar's face were two black furrows made by tears and he said: Whoever fears Allah, will not heal his distress, and whoever has reverence for Allah, will not do what he desires, and were it not for the Day of Resurrection, it would be other than what you see. And, whenever `Umar recited: " When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up; When the stars fall, losing their luster; When the mountains vanish (like a mirage); When the she-camels, ten months with young, are left untended; When the wild beasts are herded together (in human habitations); When the oceans boil over with a swell; When the souls are sorted out, (being joined, like with like); When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned, For what crime she was killed; When the Scrolls are laid open", (At-Takwir 1-10)

﴿ إِذَا ٱلشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ﴿١﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلنُّجُومُ ٱنكَدَرَتْ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ﴿٣﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ﴿٤﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ﴿٥﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلنُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلْمَوْءُۥدَةُ سُئِلَتْ ﴿٨﴾ بِأَيِّ ذَنۢبٍ قُتِلَتْ ﴿٩﴾ وَإِذَا ٱلصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

He fell in a faint. And he passed by the home of a man one day and he was praying and reciting the Surah At-Tur, and he stopped to listen, and, when he reached His saying: "Surely your Lord's chastisement is about to fall; there is none to avert it" (At-Tur 7-8)

﴿ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَٰقِعٌ ﴿٧﴾ مَّا لَهُۥ مِن دَافِعٍ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

He came down from his ass and leaned against a wall and stayed for some time, and returned to his lodging and was ill for a month, with the people visiting him and not knowing what had made him ill.

And Ali said (he had said the salutation at the close of the dawn prayer and sorrow came on him while he was upturning his hand): Truly I have seen the Companions of Muhammad Allah s blessing and peace be upon him and I have not seen anything to-day resembling them. Truly they got up in the morning dishevelled, pallid, with dust between their eyes like a funeral cortege. They had devoted the night to Allah, prostrate and erect, reciting the Book of Allah, alternating between their foreheads and their feet. And, when they got up, they recollected Allah and swayed like trees in a day of gale, and their eyes were swamped with tears, so that their garments were damp. And by Allah! it is as if I were among a crowd who pass the night in heedlessness. Then he stood up and after that he was not seen laughing, until Ibn Miljam struck him.

And `Imran Ibn Hussain said: Would that I were ashes, then the wind would scatter me in a day of gale. And Abu 'Ubaidah Ibn Al-Jarrah said: Would that I were a ram and my family slaughtered me and ate my flesh and sipped my gravy. And it used to be the case with `Ali Ibn Al-Hussain that, whenever he performed his ablutions, his colour became pallid and his family would say to him: What is

this that has become habitual with you, whenever you perform your ablutions? So he would say: Do you know before Whom I am minded to stand? (in prayer) And Musa Ibn Mas'ud said: Whenever we granted an audience to Ath-Thawri, we were as if the Fire had surrounded us in respect of what we saw of his fear and grief. And Mudar, the Reader, recited on a certain day: "This Our Record speaks about you with truth: for We were wont to put on record all that you did." (Al-Jathiyah 29)

﴿ هَٰذَا كِتَٰبُنَا يَنطِقُ عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنسِخُ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

And `Abd Al-Wahid Ibn Zaid wept until he swooned; and, when he revived, he said: By Your Might, I have never disobeyed You so far as in me lies, so assist me with Your furtherance that I may obey You.

And Al-Miswar Ibn Makhramah used to be unable to hear anything of the Qur'an on account of the intensity of his fear. And there had been recited in his presence a word and a verse and he gave a shriek and was not mentally composed for days afterwards, until a man from Khath'am came upon him and recited to him: " The day We shall gather the righteous to (Allah) Most Gracious, like a band presented before a king for honours. And We shall drive the sinners to hell, like thirsty cattle driven down to water." (Maryam 85-86)

﴿ يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَفْدًا ۝ وَنَسُوقُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا ﴾

So he said: I am among the sinners and not among those who show piety. Repeat the saying to me, O Reader. So he repeated it to him and he gave his last gasp and reached the next world. And there was recited in the presence of Yahya Al-Bakka': "Were you to see when they are halted by their Lord." (Al-An'am 30)

﴿ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ وُقِفُوا۟ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ﴾

And he gave a shriek and remained ill because of it for the space of four months, being visited from every corner of Basra.

And Malik Ibn Dinar said: I was circumambulating the House, when I came upon a little slave girl performing her devotions and clinging to the curtains of the Ka'bah, while she said: O Lord, how many a lust there is whose pleasure has departed, and whose consequences have remained! O Lord, do You not possess any other correction and punishment save the Fire? And she was weeping and maintained her posture until dawn broke. Malik said: So, when I saw that, I placed my hand on my head, shrieking: I am saying may his mother be bereft of Malik! And it is related that Al-Fudail was seen on the day of 'Arafat, and the people were praying and he was weeping the burning hot tears of a woman bereaved, until, when the sun had almost set, he seized hold of his beard; then he raised his head to heaven and said: O woe is me with You , even if You are forgiving. Then he joined himself to the people. And Ibn 'Abbas was asked about those who fear, so he said: Their hearts are ulcerated by fear and their eyes are tearful. They say: How can we rejoice while death is behind us and the grave before us and the resurrection our rendezvous and our route is by Hell and in front of Allah our Lord is our halting place ?

And Al-Hassan passed by a youth who was engulfed in his laughter, and he was sitting in the company of a crowd. So Al-Hassan said to him: Have you crossed over the Bridge? He said: No. He said: Do you know whether your trend is towards the Garden or the Fire? He said: No. He said: What then does this laughter mean ? He (the narrator) said: And that youth was not seen laughing thereafter. And it was the custom of Hammad Ibn Abd Rabbih when he sat down to sit on his haunches. And it was said to him: I wish you would relax. So he would say: That is the posture of security and I am anything but secure, since I have disobeyed Allah. And `Umar Ibn Abd Al-Aziz said: It was for nothing but considerations of mercy that Allah set this negligence, in the hearts of the creatures, in order that they might not die for fear of Allah. And Malik Ibn Dinar said: Certainly I have been concerned lest, when I die, He will command them to shackle and manacle me; then they will bear me off to my Lord just as the runaway slave is borne off to his master.

And Hatim Al-Asamm said: Do not be deceived by a salubrious place, for there is no place more salubrious than the Garden and Adam met his deserts in it. And do not be deceived by the multiplication of worship, for the Devil met his deserts after the length of his worship. And do not be deceived by much knowledge, for Balaam (cf. Nu. xxii f.) used to adorn the Greatest Name of Allah and see what he encountered. And do not be deceived by the vision of the sound in faith, for there is no person of greater standing with Allah than the Elect 1 (Muhammad) and neither relations nor enemies were benefited by his encounter (with Allah).

And as-Sari said: Truly I look at my nose several times every day for fear that my face may have been blackened. And Abu Hafs said: For forty years my belief concerning myself has been that Allah will direct to me a look of severe displeasure and my deeds point towards that. And Ibn Al-Mubarak went out among his companions on a certain day and said: Truly I took a liberty yesterday with Allah. I asked Him for the Garden. And Umm Muhammad Ibn Ka'b Al-Qarzi said to her son: O my boy, truly I know you as a good child and a virtuous adult, but what you do with your nights and days makes it look as if you had inaugurated a pernicious heresy. So he said: O Mother, what will make me secure from Allah having come suddenly on me while I was engaged in one of my sins, so that He has taken a loathing to me and said: By My Might and Majesty! I will not pardon you. And Al-Fudail said: Truly I do not covet the prophet who is sent or the king who is preferred or the creature who is sound in faith. Will not these encounter the resurrection ? The only person whom I covet is he who was not created. And it is recorded that the fear of the Fire entered a stripling among the Helpers, and he was weeping to such an extent that it detained him in the house. So the Prophet came and went in to him and embraced him and he fell dead. So he said: Prepare your companion for burial, for separation from the Fire has crushed his liver.

And it is recorded concerning Ibn Abu Maisarah that whenever he retired to his bed he would say: O that my mother had not borne me! So his mother said to him: O Maisarah, truly Allah has made a good job of your guidance towards

Islam. He said: Granted, but Allah has made clear to us that we are those who go down to the Fire, and He has not made clear to us that we shall come up from it. And it was said to Al-Farqad as-Sabakhi: Tell us the most wonderful thing you have heard concerning the children of Israel. So he said: I have heard that five hundred virgins entered the Jerusalem temple, their attire being wool and hair-cloth; and they were recollecting Allah's reward and punishment, and all of them died in a single day.

And Ata' As-Sulami was one of those who fear and he would never ask Allah for the Garden; all he would ask for was forgiveness. And it was said to him during his illness: Do you not desire anything? So he said: Surely, fear of Hell has not left a place in my heart for desire. And it was said: Truly he did not lift his head to heaven nor laugh for forty years, and he raised his head one day and was stricken with fear and collapsed, and a slit was made in his stomach. And he would feel his body on certain nights for fear that he had been metamorphosed. And whenever a gale or lightning struck them or dearness of food, he would say: This is striking them on my account, would that Ata' were dead for the relief of the people. And Ata said: We went out with 'Utbah, Al-Ghulam, and in our company were adults and adolescents, to pray the dawn prayer with the sunset purification. Their legs had become swollen through their long stand, their eyes were sunken in their heads, their skin stuck to their bones, and their veins stood out as if they were whipcords. They became as if their skins were the rinds of water melons and as if they had come out from the grave to report how Allah preferred the obedient and deposed the disobedient. So, while they were going along, one of them passed by a certain place and he fell in a faint and his companions sat round him weeping on a day when the cold was intense. And his forehead was dripping sweat, so they brought water and wiped his face and he recovered. And they asked him about his experience, so he said: Truly I remembered that I had disobeyed Allah in that place.

And Salih Al-Murri said: I recited to a man who was one of the devotees: "On the Day when their faces will be turned about in the Fire, they will say: 'Lo! Would that we had obeyed Allah and the Messenger." (Al-Ahzab 33)

﴿ وَأَطِعْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ﴾

So he fell in a swoon. Then he revived and said: Give me more of it, O Salih, for I find it perplexing. So I recited: "Whenever they wish to come out of it, they will be sent back into it." (As-Sajdah 20)

﴿ كُلَّمَآ أَرَادُوٓاْ أَن يَخْرُجُواْ مِنْهَآ أُعِيدُواْ فِيهَا ﴾

So he fell dead. And it is reported that Zurarah Ibn Abu Awfa led the people in the morning prayer, and, when he recited: "When the Trumpet is sounded" (Al-Muddaththir 8)

﴿ فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي ٱلنَّاقُورِ ﴾

He fell in a faint and was carried away a corpse. And Yazid Ar-Raqishi came into the presence of `Umar Ibn `Abd Al-`Aziz and he (`Umar) said: Preach to me, O Yazid. So he said: O Commander of the Faithful, know that you are not

the first Caliph to die. So he wept. Then he said: Give me more. He said: O Commander of the Faithful, there is no ancestor between you and Adam who is not a corpse. So he wept. Then he said: Give me more, O Yazid. So he said: O Commander of the Faithful, there is no lodging between you, and the Garden and the Fire. So he collapsed in a faint.

And Maimun Ibn Mahran said: When this verse was revealed: "Surely the Hell will be the promised land for them all", (Al-Hijr 43)

﴿ وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴾

Salman, the Persian, gave a shriek and placed his hand on his head and went out as a fugitive for three days during which they could not contain him. And Dawud Aţ-Ta'i saw a woman weeping over the head of her son's grave, while she said: O my son, would that I knew whether or not the worm has bitten you with its industrious nibble. And Dawud went into a swoon and fell on the spot.

And it was said: Sufyan Ath-Thawri was ill and his symptoms were disclosed to a Dhimmi physician (non-Muslim living under Muslims' safety) and he said: Fear has severed the liver of this man. And he came and felt his arteries and said: I did not know there was his like in the Muslim community. And Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said: I asked Allah that He would give access to a gate of fear, so He opened up and I was afraid for my reason and said: O Lord, according as I can bear it. So my heart was quietened. And `Abd Allah Ibn `Amr. Ibn Al-As said: Weep and, if you cannot weep make pretence of weeping. By the One in whose hand my soul is, if any of you knew (what was in store) he would scream until his voice was cut off and would pray until his back was broken. And it is as if he pointed to the meaning of his (Muhammad's) saying: If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and weep much.

And Al-`Anbari said: The Masters of Tradition were assembled at the gate of Al-Fudail Ibn 'Iyad and he came suddenly into their view at a window. He was weeping and his beard was quivering and he said: Get down to your Qur'an and to prayer. Woe unto you, this is not a time for traditions. This is a time for nothing but weeping and entreaty and humility and prayer like that of a drowning man. Guard your tongue and preserve your mobility and discipline your heart and hold on to what you 'know' and let go what you abhor. And Al-Fudail was seen walking on a certain day and it was said to him: Whither bound? He said: I do not know. And he was walking about dejected with fear.

And Dharr Ibn 'Amr said to his father 'Amr Ibn Dharr : Why is it that the theologians discourse and no one weeps, whereas, when you discourse, I hear weeping on every side? So he said: O my son, the weeping of the bereaved mother is not like the weeping of the woman who is hired. And it is related that a crowd of people halted by a devotee who was weeping and they said: What is it that makes you weep? May Allah have compassion on you. He said: An ulcer which those who fear find in their heart. They said: And what is it ? He said: The fear of the summons for presentation to Allah. And Al-Khawas used to weep and say in his supplication: I am lifted up in pride and my flesh is too weak to serve You, so embrace me.

And Salih Al-Murri said: Ibn as-Sammak came up to us once and said: Show me something of the marvels of your devotees. So I brought him to a man who was in his hut in a certain quarter of the town, and we asked permission to enter, and behold! a man who was working with palm fronds and I recited to him: " When the yokes (shall be) round their necks, and the chains; they shall be dragged along; In the Boiling fetid fluid; then in the Fire shall they be burned." (Ghafir 71-72)

﴿ إِذِ ٱلْأَغْلَٰلُ فِىٓ أَعْنَٰقِهِمْ وَٱلسَّلَٰسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ فِى ٱلْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِى ٱلنَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

The man gave a gasp and fell in a faint and we went out from his presence and left him in this state. And we went off to another man, and we entered in to him and I recited this verse and he gave a gasp and fell in a faint. So we went off and asked permission to go in to a third man and he said: Enter, if you will not distract me from my Lord. So I recited: "That is for him who fears My judgement-seat and fears a threat." (Ibrahim 14)

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِى وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

And he gave a gasp and blood appeared from his nostrils and he wallowed in his blood until it was dried up. So we left him in this state and went out, and I took him on a tour of six persons, from the presence of each we went out, leaving him in a faint. Then I brought him to the seventh and we asked permission to enter and behold! a woman from within the hut saying: Enter. So we entered and behold! a Shaykh in a trance, sitting in his oratory. So we greeted him, but he did not notice our salutation, and so I said to him in a raised voice: Is there not a morrow appointed for the creature? So the Shaykh said: In whose Presence? Alas! for you. Then he remained stupefied, opening his mouth and, with a fixed stare, crying out with his weak voice: Alas! Alas! until the voice was cut off. So his wife said: Make your way out, for you will not benefit from him for the moment. And, when that was over, I enquired of the people, and behold! three had revived and three had attained to Allah. And as for the Shaykh he remained in his condition, dazed and bewildered, for three days, without performing a religious obligation, and, when the three days had passed, he came to his senses.

And Yazid Ibn Al-Aswad used to be of the opinion that he was one of the Foundation Members, and he had sworn that he would never laugh nor sleep in a recumbent position, nor eat butter. So he was never seen laughing nor lying down nor eating butter until he died. And Al-Hajjaj said to Sa'd Ibn Jubair: I have heard that you have never laughed. So he said: How could I laugh with Hell ablaze and the manacles installed and the Warders of Hell given their assignment? And a man said to Al-Hassan : O Abu Sa'd: How do you fare? He said: Well. He said: How is your state? So Al-Hassan smiled and said: You ask me about my state. What do you suppose concerning people who have travelled in a ship until they were in mid-ocean, and then their ship is broken up and every man of them takes hold of a spar. In what state is he? The man said: In a state of great extremity. Al-Hassan said: My state is one of greater extremity than theirs.

A woman client went in to `Umar Ibn `Abd Al-'Aziz and greeted him. Then she took up her stance towards the oratory in his room and she prayed in it with two bows and her eyes conquered her and she was lulled to sleep and was induced to weep in her sleep. Then she was roused and said: O Commander of the Faithful, by Allah! I have seen a miracle. He said: And what was it ? She said: I saw the Fire and its flames were licking its people. Then a bridge was brought and was placed over the centre of it. So he said: Go on. She said: And `Abd Al-Malik Ibn Marwan was brought and was borne on it, and he had gone only a little way when the bridge capsized him and he was flung into Hell. So `Umar said: Go on. She said: Then Al-Walid Ibn `Abd Al-Malik was brought and he was borne on it, and he had gone only a little way when the bridge capsized him and he was flung into Hell. So `Umar said: Go on. She said: Then Sulaiman Ibn `Abd Al-Malik was brought and he had progressed only a little way over it when the bridge capsized him and he was thrown in the same way. So `Umar said: Go on. She said: Then you were brought and by Allah! O Commander of the Faithful-then `Umar gave a shriek and fell in a faint. So she came up to his side and began shouting in his ear: O Commander of the Faithful, truly I saw you and by Allah! you were saved, truly I saw you and by Allah! you were saved. He (the narrator) went on: And she was calling out and he was shouting and scraping the ground with his feet.

And it is related that Uwais Al-Qarni used to be present with the story-teller and would be weeping because of his word, and when he recollected the Fire, Uwais would give a scream; then he would rise up and make off. So the people would follow him saying: Mad! mad! And Mu'adh Ibn Jabal said: Truly the fear of the believer is not quietened until he leaves behind him the Bridge of Hell. And Tawus used to roll out his mattress and lie down and toss about like a seed in the frying-pan. Then he would leap up and fold it up and would face the Qiblah until morning and would say: The recollection of Hell has dispersed the sleep of those who fear. And Al-Hassan Al-Basri said: A man emerges from the Fire after a thousand years. O that I were that man. And he said that solely on account of his fear of eternal punishment and the evil of the Seal. And it is related that he did not laugh for forty years. He (the narrator) went on: And when you saw him squatting, your impression was as if a prisoner had come forward in order that you might strike off his neck. And when he spoke, it was as if he were confronting the next world and were reporting on its sights. And when he was silent, it was as if the Fire were kindled between his eyes. And he was chided for the extremity of his grief and fear, so he said: What makes me secure from Allah having come suddenly on me, while I was engaged in something which He abhors, and His having taken a loathing to me and said: Be off, for I will not pardon you, since I am dealing with a person who will not co-operate ?

And on the authority of Ibn as-Sammak who said: I preached on a certain day in a meeting and a youth in the crowd stood up and said: O Abu `Abbas, truly you have preached to-day such a word that I should not care were I never to hear another. I said: And what is it? He said: Your saying: The hearts of those who fear have grasped the duration of the two eternities, whether in the Garden or the Fire. Then he disappeared from my view and so I lost him in the meeting. Or, in

another version: I did not see him, so I enquired about him, and I was told that he was sick and was being visited. So I went to visit him and said: O my brother, what condition is this I see you in? So he said: O Abu `Abbas, it is the consequence of your saying: The hearts of those who fear have grasped the duration of the two eternities, whether in the Garden or the Fire. He went on: Then he died and I saw him in sleep and I said: O my brother, how did Allah deal with you? He said: He has pardoned me and shown me compassion and given me entrance to the Garden. I said: By what means? He said: By means of the word.

And these are the things which terrify the prophets and saints and scholars and sound in faith, and fear is more appropriate to us than to them. But fear does not go along with a multitude of sins; no, it goes along with purity of heart and perfection of 'knowledge'. And, if not, then He has not given us a feeling of security because of the paucity of our sins and the multitude of our acts of obedience. No; our lusts have driven us and reprobation has prevailed over us and our heedlessness and hardness have obstructed us from inspecting our states. So that neither the nearness of the journey will rouse us, nor the multitude of sins move us, nor the witnessing of the states of those who fear terrify us, nor the danger of the Seal disquiet us. So let us ask Allah to overtake our states with his bounty and generosity and so make us whole, if the movement of the tongue in asking, totally unsupported by self-help, will benefit us.

And among the things to be wondered at is that, when we desire wealth in this world, we sow and plant and trade and cross over seas and deserts and incur risks. And, if we seek after the status of knowledge, we study and become fatigued in retaining it, and repeating it, and pass sleepless nights. And we are energetic in the search for our provisions and do not rely on the pledge of Allah to us, and do not sit in our houses and say: O Allah provide for us. Then, when our eyes are lifted towards the Kingdom which is enduring and does not pass away, we are content to say with our tongues: O Allah pardon us and show us compassion. And by the One to Whom we return, and by the One in Whom is our boast! He will call out and say: "A man gets exactly the fruit of his endeavor." (An-Najm 39)

﴿ وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ ﴾

"And with regard to Allah, let not the deceiver deceive you." (Fatir 5)

﴿ وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿٥﴾ ﴾

And: "O man, what has deceived you as to your generous Lord ?" (Al-Infitar 6)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلْكَرِيمِ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

Then all that does not rouse us nor bring us out from the wadies of our delusions and wishful thoughts, and what is this if not a fearful trial were it not that Allah bestows sincere repentance on us by grace, overtaking us with it and protecting us. So let us ask Allah to bestow penitence on us. More; let us ask Him to drive towards repentance the secret things of our hearts and not to make the movement of the tongue in asking for repentance the limit of our portion. For, in

that case, we should be among those who say and do not act who hear and are not receptive. When we hear the sermon, we weep, and when the time for action comes in connection with what we have heard, we are disobedient. And there is no mark of alienation greater than this. So let us ask Allah to bestow on us success and direction through His grace and bounty.

And we shall cut short our recital of the states of those who fear to what we have cited. For a little of this will confront the receptive heart and will suffice, whereas much of it, even if it overflows the negligent heart, will not be adequate.

Truly the monk spoke the truth of whom `Isa Ibn Malik, Al-Khawlani, (he was one of the most elect of the devotees) related that he saw him halted at the gate of the Jerusalem temple with the appearance of one grief-stricken through extreme dejection, his tears hardly ever dry, because of the profusion of his weeping. And `Isa said: When I saw him, his aspect terrified me and I said: O monk, lay an obligation on me to keep on your authority. So he said: O my brother, with what would I command you if you are able to occupy the place of a man whom wild beasts and reptiles have surrounded, and who is fearful and watchful, fearing lest he may be negligent and so the beasts will maul him, or distracted and the reptiles sting him. So his heart is filled with fear and terror, and he passes his nights in fear, even if those who delude themselves feel secure, and his days in grief, even if the empty-headed make merry. Then he turned his back on me and left me. So I said: Will you not tell me something more, perhaps it would benefit me? So he said: The smallest quantity of water satisfies the thirsty man. And he certainly spoke the truth, for fear will move soonest the heart which is pure, but every warning glances off the heart which is hardened.

And what he mentioned in his hypothesis is that wild beasts and reptiles had surrounded him. And so one ought not to suppose that it is (merely) hypothetical. No, it is reality, for, if you were to view your inner man with the light of insight, you would see it filled with different kinds of wild beasts and species of reptiles, like anger, lust, rancour, envy, pride, self-esteem, self-righteousness and the rest. And it is these which are constantly mauling you and stinging you, if you neglect them for an instant, except that your eye is veiled from the sight of them. So, when the cover is withdrawn and you are placed in your grave, you will encounter them and they will be imaged to you according to the forms and shapes which suit their respective meanings. So you will see with your eye scorpions and snakes and they will surround you in your grave. And these are nothing but the attributes present to you now whose forms have been disclosed to you. So, if you desire to slay and subdue them, you are able for it before death. So do it. But, if you do not, you will become habituated to stings and bites in the kernel of your heart, how much more in your outer flesh.

Book four: poverty and asceticism

It is the fourth book of the quarter of saviors of the revival of religious sciences

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah with whose praises the sands glorify, to Whom the shades fall in prostration, and for fear of Whose power, the mountains collapse. He has created man from sticky clay, and then adorned his form according to the best of molds and the most perfect proportion, and protected his heart with the light of guidance from being involved in the muddles of error, and gave him permission to serve Him every morning and evening. Then He lighted up the insight of the sincere in his worship with the light of consideration, until he observed therewith the presence of glory. There seemed to him from the joy, brightness and perfection what made him regard as ugly all beauty and prettiness else, and render heavy on himself all that diverted him from continuous watch of it. The apparent world seemed to him in the form of a beautiful woman strutting and bending as walking, while its inside as a defective old woman kneaded from the clay of disappointment and molded in the mold of frustration and regret, and wrapped in her garment in order to screen her ugly secrets and mysteries with the niceties of magic and deception. When there has been revealed to the Gnostics its ugly secrets and evil mysteries, they abstained in it, out of aversion they showed towards it, and left boasting and mutual rivalry for piling up (the good things of this world) with offspring and wealth, and rather devoted themselves wholeheartedly to the presence of glory, and joined themselves with it with an unbreakable rope, in which they witnessed abiding eternal things.

Allah's blessing and peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad, the chief of all the Prophets and Messengers, and upon his family, the best of families on the surface of the earth.

Coming to the point: the world is an enemy to Allah Almighty: with its deception, those who strayed have strayed, and with its cunning, those who slipped have slipped. To love it is the greatest mistake and sin, and to hate it is the best act of worship. We have described it in detail, and dispraised its evils more enough in the Book of Condemnation of World, but now, we are going to talk about the excellence of aversion for, and abstinence in it, since it is the most important savior. There is no hope of salvation but to abandon and desert the world entirely. But to abandon it is a result of either its remoteness from the servant, and this is called poverty, or the servant's remoteness from it, and this is called asceticism. Each has several degrees to attain happiness and a portion of helping one obtain felicity and success.

Now, let's discuss the real nature of poverty and asceticism, and their degrees, divisions, conditions and rulings. This will be in two parts: the first will be assigned to poverty, and the other to asceticism.

part One: poverty

In this part, the following topics will be dealt with:
Exposition of real nature of poverty
Exposition of excellence of poverty in general
Exposition of merit of some particular poor
Exposition of superiority of poverty over richness
Exposition of the etiquettes of the poor in his poverty
Exposition of his etiquettes in accepting gifts
Exposition of prohibition of begging with no necessity
Exposition of the extent to which self-sufficiency makes begging unlawful
Exposition of states of beggars
Allah may guide us to the right

CHAPTER ONE

EXPOSITION OF REAL NATURE OF POVERTY; AND DIFFERENT STATES AND NAMES OF THE POOR

It should be known to you that poverty or neediness is to lose what one is in need of. But to lose what is not needed is not called poverty. If what is needed is available, one does not become poor. Having understood that, you would know that everything save Allah Almighty is needy, for all things are in need of permanent existence which depends upon the bounty and generosity of Allah Almighty. If there is in the universe an existent whose existence does not depend on anything else, it would be the absolute self-sufficient; and that is unimaginable but to be one and only, that is absolute self-sufficient. In existence, there is only one self-sufficient, and all things save Him are needy of Him, in order to obtain their permanent existence. To that meaning Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " But Allah is free of all wants, and it is you that are needy." (Muhammad 38)

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ ٱلْغَنِىُّ وَأَنتُمُ ٱلْفُقَرَآءُ ﴾

That is the meaning of the absolute neediness

But we intend not to explain the significance of the absolute neediness. We rather mean to clarify the meaning of the poverty, i.e. the neediness of wealth, otherwise, the servant's neediness to his things is infinite, for his needs are unlimited. One of those needs is the wealth; and that is why we want to explain in more detail.

Let's say that such as loses property is called a poor in relation to that which he loses, if what is lost is needed by him who loses it. The poor in that meaning has five states:

The first state is the highest, according to which if wealth comes to one, he would reject it, dislike it, be harmed by it, thereupon he would escape from taking it out of aversion towards it, and in flight from its evil and harm. That is called asceticism, and he is ascetic.

The second is that according to which he does not desire for it in such a way as to make him rejoice at it, nor dislike it in such a way that it would cause harm

to him if it comes, or that he would abstain in it if it is available to him. That is called contentment, and he is contented.

The third is that the presence of property is dearer than its absence, out of desire for it, but not strong enough to stimulate him to endeavor to obtain it: but if it comes to him easily without effort, he would take it and rejoice at it; and if he is to trouble himself to obtain it, he should not do so. That is called satisfaction, and he is satisfied, for he satisfies himself with what is available, and does not work to get more, given his weak desire for it.

The fourth is that he leaves seeking because of inability, although he has desire for property. If there is a way for him to get it, surely, he would follow it. That is desire, and he is desirous.

The fifth is that one loses what he is compelled to lose, like the hungry who loses bread, and the naked who loses clothes. That is called necessity, and he is compelled by necessity, no matter how strong or weak his desire for money might be. This state is hardly free from desire for obtaining money.

Those are the five states of poverty, the highest of which is asceticism. If necessity is joined to asceticism, it would result in the utmost degree of asceticism, as will be shown later. Behind those five, there is a further state, which is higher than asceticism, i.e. that both existence and loss of money are equally the same. If it is available, one would not rejoice at nor is harmed by it, and if it is lost, it would be the same. His state then is like the state of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" who received one hundred thousand Dirhams as a part of her fixed income, and she distributed all the sum at once. Her servant maid said to her: "Were you not able to save, from what you have distributed, even a single Dirham to buy meat to break our fast therewith?" she said: "Had you reminded me, surely, I would have done accordingly." If the whole world with all that it contains is given to such a man, it would be the same to him, for he sees the wealth in the treasury of Allah Almighty, and not with himself, making no distinction between being in his hand or in the hand of anyone else. The man of such a state is called the dispenser, for he dispenses with both presence and loss of money.

We should differentiate between such and the wealthy who has property among the servants. Whoever has property of which he rejoices is regarded needy of having the property remain in his hand. He is self-sufficient of obtaining money, and not of having it remain in his hand. But that dispenser is self-sufficient of obtaining the money, and of having it remain in his hand. He is not harmed by it in order to be in need of giving it out, nor he rejoices at it in order to be in need of having it remain with him. In this way, he is closer to the absolute self-sufficiency, therewith Allah Almighty is described. The servant becomes close to Allah Almighty through the attributes and not in the place.

But we do not give the man of such a state the name self-sufficient, in order for the absolute self-sufficiency to remain unique to Allah Almighty. But we give him the name of dispenser. That is because if this man dispenses with money in general, in no way could he be able to dispense with all things in existence. At the

least, he could not dispense with the help of Allah to enable him continue to dispense with property, as adorned in his heart by Allah Almighty. The heart that is bound by the love for wealth is like a slave, and that which dispenses with it is free, and it is Allah Almighty Who emancipates it from that slavery. Thus, one is in need of having this emancipation remain forever. Hearts always turn from slavery to freedom, and vice versa, for they are in between two of Allah's fingers.

It should be known to you that asceticism is the degree of the pious, and the ascetic is among those made close (to Allah Almighty). There is no wonder then that the asceticism might be a shortcoming in relation to such a man, for the good deeds of the pious are equal to the evil deeds of these made close to Allah. That is because both he who dislikes and he who likes the world are engaged in it. Anything diverts from Allah Almighty is a screen from Allah Almighty. There is no distance between you and Allah Almighty in order to be considered as a screen, for He Almighty is nearer to you than your jugular vein. There is no place where He Almighty exists in order for the heavens and the earth to be a screen between you and Him. There is no screen between you and Him but your engagement in anything other than Him. Your engagement in your own self, desires and lusts is engagement in something other than Him. Since you continue to be engaged in your own self and desires, you then would remain screened from Him. Whoever is engaged in loving himself is indeed diverted from Allah Almighty; and whoever is engaged in disliking himself is also diverted from Allah Almighty.

As well as two loves could never gather together in one heart simultaneously, no love and aversion could gather together simultaneously. He who is engaged in disliking the world is heedless of Allah Almighty, like him who is engaged in loving it. But he who is engaged in loving it is heedless, and amidst his heedlessness, he follows the way of remoteness, whereas he who is engaged in disliking it is heedless, following the way of nearness, and it is hoped that his state of heedlessness terminates and is replaced with contemplation. Perfection then is expected from him for disliking the world is a riding mount that conveys to Allah Almighty.

Think not then that disliking the world is intended in itself. The world impedes from Allah Almighty, and there is no way to reach Him without removing that impediment. That is the significance of the statement of Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani: "Whoever abstains in this world and devotes himself to that has indeed hastened to find comfort. That is because one should also, besides his abstinence from this world, engage in the hereafter." He thus showed that following the way to the hereafter is beyond asceticism.

It seems from that then that if abstinence from this world means to have no desire for its presence or absence, it would be the utmost degree of perfection. If it is to have no desire for its absence, it would be perfection in relation to the degree of the satisfied, contented and desirous, and imperfection in relation to the degree of the dispenser. The perfection in relation to money, for example, is that money becomes, in your sight, equal to water; and both the abundance and scarcity of water do not harm you unless in so much as is necessary. Although

both money and water are needed, your heart is not engaged in flight from the abundant water, nor does it dislike it. But you say: "I drink thereof as much as is needed, and provide therewith the servants of Allah as much as is needed, and never withhold it from anyone." As such your view of money should be. To be sure, both bread and water are needed, with the difference that one of them is much and the other is little.

If you know well Allah Almighty as He should be known, and are confident of the ordinance therewith He ordains the world, you would learn that your need of bread would inevitably come to you so long as you are living, just in the same way as your need of water comes to you as will be explained in detail, Allah willing in the Book of Reliance. Ahmad Ibn Abu Al-Hawari said: I said to Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani: Malik Ibn Dinar said to Al-Mughirah: "Go to the house and take the parcel you have given as a gift to me, for the enemy (Satan) whispers to me that the thief has taken it." Sulaiman said: "That is due to the weak hearts of Sufis." He showed that his aversion that the parcel be in his house is an attention caused by weakness and shortage.

You may argue: "What is the matter with the Prophets and allies (of Allah) that they ran away from property and disgusted it so much?" in reply to that, let me say that they ran away from water in the sense that they did not take from it but what satisfied their needs, and left what is beyond it. They did not accumulate it in their water-skins and pots: on the contrary, they left it in the rivers and springs for the needy and thirsty to drink thereof what they need. That means that their hearts then were not engaged in love or aversion for wealth. The treasures of the earth were brought to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" then Abu Bakr and Umar "Allah be pleased with them", and all took and spent them properly and reasonably on all sides of good. They did not run away from it in the sense that wealth and water, gold and stone are equal in their sight. What is reported of the abstention of some pertains to those who were afraid this might deceive them and tie their hearts with desires and lusts.

That is the status of the weak. It is out of their perfection to flee away and refrain from money. That is true of all people for all the creatures are weak save the Prophets and allies of Allah Almighty. But if refraining is reported of a strong, it may be that he refrained for he liked to descend to the degree of the weak in order for them to imitate him in leaving, for were they to imitate him in taking, they might have been ruined. However, to descend to the level of the weak to raise them up is the conduct of the Prophets "peace be upon them", allies and religious scholars.

You have known then that the levels are six, the highest of which is that of the dispenser, followed by the abstinent, then the contented, then the satisfied and then the desirous. Such as forced by necessity is imagined to be abstinent, contented and satisfied. His degree differs by the difference of his states. The name 'needy' applies to any of those five. But in that sense, the dispenser could not be named 'needy'. If he is to be named 'needy', it should be in the sense of his knowledge that he is in need of Allah Almighty in all of his affairs in general, and

his continuous dispensing with money in particular. The name 'needy' in relation to him is like the name 'servant' in relation to him who knows that he is a servant of Allah Almighty, given that the name of 'servant' is common to all the people for all the people are servants of Allah Almighty. Similarly, the name 'needy' is common to all the people in that sense. Whoever knows that he is in need of Allah Almighty has more right to have the name of 'needy'. In this sense, the needy then is common to both.

Having understood that, you would understand well that the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from neediness", and his statement: "Neediness is about to turn to disbelief", do not contradict his statement: "O Allah! Cause me to die as a needy and live as a needy." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas; and Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim on the authority of Abu Sa'id). That is because the neediness of such as forced by necessity is that from which he "peace be upon him" took refuge, whereas it is the neediness to confess of his humiliation and submission to Allah Almighty is that which he "peace be upon him" asked in his supplication.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPOSITION OF EXCELLENCE OF POVERTY IN GENERAL

From the Qur'an, the following Holy Verses are indicative: "(Some part is due) to the needy Muhajirs, those who were expelled from their homes and their property, while seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure, and aiding Allah and His Messenger: such are indeed the sincere ones." (Al-Hashr 8)

﴿ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ ٱلْمُهَـٰجِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَـٰرِهِمْ وَأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنًا وَيَنصُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّـٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

Do you not notice here how He Almighty has praises neediness, and gives it preference over emigration?

As for Prophetic narrations in praising neediness, they are countless. It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to his companions: "Which of people is the best?" they said: "A wealthy who gives Allah's right due on himself and his property." He said: "How good is that. But that is not whom I intend." They asked: "Then, who is the best of people O Messenger of Allah?" he "peace be upon him" said: "A needy who gives his effort (in charity)." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said to Bilal "Allah be pleased with him": "Meet Allah while you are needy, and do not meet him while you are wealthy." (Al-Hakim on the authority of Bilal; and At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Sa'id).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily, Allah Almighty loves the refraining needy who has dependents (for whom he is responsible)." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Imran Ibn Hussain). He "peace be upon him" said in a famous Hadith: "The needy among my Ummah would enter Paradise five hundred years before its wealthy." (At-

Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah). According to another version, "They would enter the Garden forty autumns, i.e. years before the wealthy." (Muslim on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr; and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Jabir and Anas). What is intended is that the desirous needy would enter the Garden forty years before the desirous wealthy; and the abstinent needy five hundred years before the desirous wealthy. To be sure, the needy are of different levels and degrees, according to their different states as we have already mentioned. The desirous needy, for example, is twenty-five degrees far from the abstinent needy.

Think not that the estimation of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" is random or by chance. It is not so for he "peace be upon him" does not speak (aught) of (his own) Desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him. That is like his statement "peace be upon him": "The good vision is one of forty-six parts of Prophethood." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Sa'id; and Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah and Ubadah Ibn As-Samit). His estimation here is based on verification. But it is not within the capacity of any human being to find the reason for it. That is because Prophethood is an attribute that gives the Prophet many characteristics therewith he is distinguished from anyone else among the people.

The first is that he knows the real nature of what pertains to Allah, His attributes, and His angels, and the hereafter in a way different from anyone else by virtue of strong certainty, verification and revelation.

The second is that he has a characteristic therewith he is able to do the miraculous and supernatural signs. We also have an attribute that enables us to do what we like and will, i.e. the power, given that the power and will all are among the acts of Allah Almighty.

The third is that he has a characteristic therewith he sees the angels in the same way as the sighted has a characteristic therewith he is distinguished from the blind.

The fourth is that he has a characteristic therewith he perceives what would be in the future, whether during wakefulness or sleep. By virtue of that characteristic, he is able to go through the Preserved Blanket and see the unseen.

Those characteristics are affirmed to Prophets apart from others, and each of those could be divided into, say, forty, fifty, sixty, or even forty-six subdivisions and parts, of which the good vision is a part. But our estimation is not based on verification in so much as on guess and speculation, and we do not know for certain whether it is that intended by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him".

The same is true of the degrees and levels of the needy. But why the desirous needy is almost one-twelfth the degree of the abstinent needy that he would not enter the Garden but only forty years before the wealthy, and why the abstinent needy would enter the Garden five hundred years before the wealthy, it is not within the capacity of anyone other than the Prophets to verify of it with certainty. The point is to relegate the belief that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" says such things randomly or by chance; and

the office of Prophethood is deemed far beyond that.

Now, let's return to the Prophetic narrations. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The best of this Ummah are the poor, and the quickest to lie in the Garden (on the Day of Judgement) are the weak." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "I have two concerns, and whoever likes them likes me and whoever dislikes them dislikes me: neediness and Jihad." It is narrated that Gabriel "peace be upon him" descended on the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Muhammad! Allah is greeting you with peace. He asks you: 'Do you like that I would turn those mountains into gold to be with you wherever you are?' the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" lowered his head for a moment after which he said: "O Gabriel! The world is the home of him who is homeless, and the property of him who has no property, and for the sake of it only the foolish gathers wealth." On that Gabriel said to him: "O Muhammad! May Allah make you firm with the well-established word." (This is reported from two Hadiths, the first by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Umamah, and the other by Ahmad on the authority of A'ishah).

It is narrated that once the Christ "peace be upon him" came during his tour upon a sleeping man and he was wrapped in a garment. He awakened him and said to him: "O sleeping man! Get up and remember Allah Almighty." He said to him: "What do you want from me? I have left the world for its people." He said: "Then, sleep my beloved." In another context, Moses "peace be upon him" came upon a man lying on dust, and there was a brick underneath his head, and both his face and beard were covered with dust, and he was wrapped in a garment. He said: "O Lord! This slave of You is lost in this world." Allah Almighty revealed to Moses "peace be upon him": "O Moses! Do you not know that if I turn My Face to cast a glance of a slave, the whole world would be drawn away from him?"

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Rafi' "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: A guest came upon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and he found nothing to serve him with. He sent me to a Jew from Khaibar with the following message: "Muhammad asks you to lend or sell to me on credit baking powder to the new moon of Rajab." I came to him and reported the message to him but he rejected unless it was by mortgage. I returned to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and told him, thereupon he said: "By Allah, I am trustworthy among the inhabitants of the heavens as well as among the inhabitants of the earth; and should he sell or lend to me, I would pay to him. Take this armor of mine and give it to him as a mortgage." When I came out the following Holy Verse was revealed: " Nor strain your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to parties of them, the splendour of the life of this world, through which We test them: but the provision of your Lord is better and more enduring." (Ta Ha 131)

﴿ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴾

That Holy Verse was revealed to console the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" for the world. (At-Tabarani).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Indeed, poverty is to adorn the faithful believer more than the good sideburns do on the cheeks of the horse." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Shaddad Ibn Aws). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "Whoever among you becomes in the morning healthy in his body, safe among his group, and has the sustenance of his day, seems as if the entire world has been given to him." (At-Tirmidhi). According to Ka'b Al-Ahbar, Allah Almighty said to Moses "peace be upon him": "O Moses! If you see poverty coming, say: 'Welcome to the motto of the righteous!'"

According to Ata' Al-Khurasani: One of the Prophets came upon the coast and behold! There was a fisher catching fish, and when he threw his net in the Name of Allah, and took it out, it was empty. He came upon another one who threw the net in the name of Satan and took it out, and it had a great quantity of fish. The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! What is that given that all of this is with Your Hand?" Allah Almighty said to His angels: "Uncover to My servant (the Prophet) the positions of both." When he saw the dignity prepared for the former and humiliation prepared for the latter, he said: "I have been pleased, O Lord."

Our Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I caught a glimpse of Paradise, and found that the majority of its inhabitants are from among the poor; and I caught a glimpse of the fire (of Hell), and found that the majority of its denizens are from among the rich and women." According to another version, I asked: "Where are the rich?" It was said: "Their fortune has detained them (from the Garden."According to a third version: "I found that the majority of the denizens of the fire (of Hell) are from among women, thereupon I asked: 'What is their matter?' it was said: 'They have been engaged in gold and saffron."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The believer's most valuable thing in this world is poverty." (Ash-Shirazi and Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Mu'adh Ibn Jabal). According to a particular tradition: "The last of Prophets to enter Paradise is Sulaiman "peace be upon him" due to his great dominion in this World; and the last of my companions to enter Paradise is Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf "Allah be pleased with him" due to his great wealth and richness in this World." According to another narration: "I have seen him enter Paradise crawling." (At-Tabarani).

According to the Christ "peace be upon him": "The rich would hardly enter Paradise." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "If Allah Almighty loves one of His servants, He puts him to trial; and if He loves him so much, He extracts him." It was said: "How does He extract him?" he said: "He causes neither property nor children to remain for him." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Utbah Al-Khawlani). According to a certain tradition: "If you see poverty coming, say 'Welcome to the motto of the righteous'; and if you see richness coming, say 'That is a sin whose punishment has been hastened on.'" (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Makhul from Abu Ad-Darda'). Moses "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! Who are Your

beloved from among Your creatures so that I would love them?" He said: "Every poor from among the people." The Christ "peace be upon him" said: "I indeed like indigence and dislike luxury." The dearest of names by which he "peace be upon him" liked to be called by is "O indigent".

It is further narrated that the rich and wealthy among people like Al-Aqra' Ibn Habis At-Tamimi, Uyainah Ibn Hisn Al-Fazari, Abbas Ibn Mirdas As-Sulami and others came and found the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" sitting with Suhaib, Bilal, Ammar, Khabbab, and others from the weak (and poor) among the faithful believers. It was said that due to their poverty, they used to put on coarse wool, in which they sweated and the smell of their sweat would exude and cause harm to the rich and wealthy among the people. When they saw them sitting around the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", they looked down upon them and then they came and sat alone with him and said: "We would like that you should fix a private gathering for us, with which the Arabs come to know our superiority. Indeed, the Arab delegates always come to you, and we feel shy of the fact that the Arabs might see us sitting in the company of those (freed) slaves. So, when we come to you, drive them away from you, and when we finish (and turn away), you could sit with them if you like." He answered in the affirmative, thereupon they said to him: "Write a document for us in confirmation of that." He called for a blank document, and he called upon Ali to write that, and we were sitting in one side (of the gathering). Such being the case Gabriel "Peace be upon him" came to him and revealed to him (Allah's saying): "Send not away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face. In naught are you accountable for them, and in naught are they accountable for you, that you should turn them away, and thus be (one) of the unjust." (Al-An'am 52)

﴿ وَلَا تَطْرُدِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَدَوٰةِ وَٱلْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُۥ ۖ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ ﴾

In connection with Al-Aqra' Ibn Habis and Uyainah Ibn Hisn, He (Almighty) said: "Thus did We try some of them by comparison with others that they should say: "Is it these then that Allah has favoured from amongst us?" Does not Allah know best those who are grateful?" then He further said: "When those come to you who believe in Our Signs, say: "Peace be on you; your Lord has inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy", thereupon we came so much nearer to him that we placed our knees on his. Henceforth, whenever the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" sat with us and then he wanted to go, he would get up and leave us, thereupon Allah Almighty revealed: "And keep your soul content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face; and let not your eyes pass beyond them, (nor devote yourself to the nobles among them) seeking the pomp and glitter of this Life; nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, (i.e. Uyainah and Al-Aqra') one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds." (Al-Kahf 28)

﴿ وَٱصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَدَوٰةِ وَٱلْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُۥ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

Then, He set forth for them the parable of two men and the parable of the life of this world. Khabbab further said: From this day forward, whenever we sat with the Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” and then it was time for his departure, we would get up and leave him, in order to enable him to get up (and go as he liked). (Ibn Majah on the authority of Khabbab and Salman).

It is further narrated that once Ibn Umm Maktum "Allah be pleased with him" and he was blind and poor, sought the permission to be admitted by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and he had one of the nobles of Quraish, thereupon he "peace be upon him" felt it. On that occasion Allah Almighty revealed: "(The Prophet) frowned and turned away, Because there came to him the blind man (interrupting). But what could tell you but that perchance he might grow (in spiritual understanding)? Or that he might receive admonition, and the teaching might profit him?" (i.e. Ibn Umm Maktum, the blind) "As to one who regards himself as self-sufficient,

To him do you attend" (i.e. that noble from Quraish). (Abasa 1-6)

﴿ عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰٓ ﴿١﴾ أَن جَآءَهُ ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُۥ يَزَّكَّىٰٓ ﴿٣﴾ أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنفَعَهُ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰٓ ﴿٤﴾ أَمَّا مَنِ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ فَأَنتَ لَهُۥ تَصَدَّىٰ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

(At-Tirmidhi on the authority of A'ishah).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, the (poor) servant will be brought before Allah Almighty Who will excuse to him in the same way as people excuse to each other in this world, saying: "By My Honor and Glory! I have not taken the worldly pleasures away from you for your being slight or humiliated in My Sight. But I have done so for the dignity and superiority I have prepared for you (in the hereafter). Come out, O My servant, to those rows (of people), and whoever provided for your sustenance or clothes for My Sake, seeking thereby My Countenance, is for you: take him by the hand." On that Day, the people will be in their sweat to the ears. He would break in rows and look at such as did that with him and take him by the hand and admit him to Paradise." (Abu Ash-Shaykh on the authority of Anas).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Multiply your acquaintances from among the poor, and do favor to them as much as you can for they will have a turn (of power to come)." They asked: "O Messenger of Allah! What is their turn (of power)?" he "peace be upon him" said: "When it is the Day of Judgement, it will be said to them: "Seek for whoever fed you even with a fragment (of food), gave you even a sip of water, or clothed you even with a garment, and take him by the hand and go with him to admit him to Paradise." (Abu Na'im on the authority of Al-Hussain Ibn Ali).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I entered the Garden and heard a movement nearby and looked and

behold! There was Bilal. I caught a glimpse of its upper part, and behold! There were the poor of my nation along with their offspring. I then caught a glimpse of its lower part, and behold! There were a few number of rich and women. I asked: "O my Lord! What is the matter with them?" He said: "As for women, they were harmed by both gold and silk. As for the rich, they were engaged in accounting (their property and wealth) very long." I inspected my companions and did not see Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf among them. Later on, he came to me weeping. I asked him: "What has delayed you from me?" he said: "O Messenger of Allah! I did not reach you until I encountered calamitous things and thought I would never see you." I asked him: "Why?" he said: "I was being reckoned for my wealth." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Umamah).

Consider that, given that Abd-Ar-Rahman "Allah be pleased with him" was the one of the great precedence (in Islam) along with the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and among the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise, and among the rich whom the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" pointed out when he said: "Except him who said (i.e. spent) with his property such and such." But even, he was so harmed by richness.

It is reported that once the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" entered upon a poor man and found that he had nothing at all, thereupon he said: "Were the light of this man to be distributed among all the inhabitants of the earth, it would extend to cover them all." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Should I not tell you about the kings of the people of Paradise?" they said: "Yes O Messenger of Allah." He "peace be upon him" said: "Every weak who is looked down upon by others, of disheveled hair and (it does not matter to him whether his clothes are tidy or) covered with dust (out of his humbleness), even though, if he takes an oath by Allah, He (Almighty) will fulfill his oath." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Harithah Ibn Wahb).

It is narrated on the authority of Imran Ibn Hussain "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I had a good position and rank with the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". One day I came to him and he said to me: "O Imran! You have a good position and rank with us: do you like to accompany me to visit Fatimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and inquire about her health?" I said: "Yes, let my father and mother sacrifice their lives for you O Messenger of Allah." He stood and I stood with him (and we proceeded on) until he came at the gate of the house of Fatimah "Allah be pleased with her". He knocked the door and said: "Peace be upon you! could I enter?" she said: "Yes O Messenger of Allah." He asked: "I and the man that is with me?" she said: "Yes you and the man that is with you O Messenger of Allah." Then she said: "By Him Who has sent you as a Prophet, I have nothing over me but a garment." He said: "Do with it such and such." He beckoned with his hand to her (to cover her body with it). She said: "I have then screened my body: what about my head?" he threw to her a worn out sheet he was having over himself and said: "Put it over your head." Then, she

admitted them. he entered and said: "Peace be upon you O my daughter! What are you now?" she said: "By Allah, I have become suffering, and what increased my pain is that I have no food to sustain myself, and hunger has troubled me." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" went on weeping, and said: "Do not be scared O my daughter. By Allah, I have never had food for three days; and I am dearer than you to Allah Almighty, and were I to ask my Lord, surely He would provide me with food. But I have preferred the hereafter to this world." Then, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" patted on her shoulder and said to her: "Receive the glad tidings! By Allah, you will be the chief of women of Paradise." She said: "Then, what about Asia, the wife of Pharaoh, and Maryam, daughter of Imran?" on that he said: "Asia is the chief of the women of her own world; Maryam is the chief of the women of her own world; Khadijah is the chief of the women of her own world; and you are the chief of the women of your own world: you will have your homes of pipes in which you will receive no harm nor noise." Then, he said to her: "Be satisfied with (Ali) your paternal cousin, for by Allah, I have given you in marriage to a chief in this world, and a chief in the hereafter." (Ahmad and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ma'qil Ibn Yasar).

It is narrated on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: "If the people come to dislike the poor among them, give preference to the construction of this world, and compete each other to collect money, then they would be afflicted by Allah with four disfavors: draught along the time, injustice of rulers, disloyalty to leaders, and the harm from enemies." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami).

From among the traditions, a mention may be made of the following:

Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" said: "The one who has two Dirhams is more stingy (or will be reckoned more) than the one who has only one Dirham (and so on)." Once, Umar "Allah be pleased with him" sent to Sa'id Ibn Amir "Allah be pleased with him" one thousand Dinars and he returned home in sadness and grief. His wife asked him: "What has happened?" he said: "Nothing more severe than that (i.e. this money)." Then he said to her: "Give me your worn out breast garment." He split it into pieces, and made the money into parcels which he divided among the people. Then, he stood in prayer and went on weeping until the morning of the coming day. Then he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" having said: "The poor among my nation would enter Paradise five hundred years before their rich to the extent that the rich would try to enter into their middle and he would be taken by the hand and brought out from among them." (At-Tirmidhi but on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Three will enter Paradise without reckoning: a man who (is so much poor that when he) wants to wash his (sole) garment he will have nothing to put on his body (until his garment gets clean); a man who (is very poor that he) never puts two cooking vessels simultaneously on the oven; and a man who asks for (something to) drink, and (as he has nothing other than water to drink) it is not said to him: 'Which drink

do you want?'." It is said that a poor man entered the gathering of Ath-Thawri who ordered him to pass over the rows and come close to him. In his comment on that he said: "Had you been rich, I would not have brought you close to me." The rich among his companions hoped to be poor for he used to bring the poor so much close to him, and turn away from the rich. According to Al-Mu'ammar: "I have never seen more humiliating than the rich nor more honored than the poor in the gathering of Ath-Thawri,."

According to a wise man: "How poor is mankind! If he fears fire in the same way as he fears poverty, he would be saved from both; and if he desires for Paradise in the same way as he desires for self-sufficiency, he would win both; and if he fears Allah in secret in the same way as he fears His creatures in public, he would become happy in both abodes (of this world and the hereafter)." According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them": "Cursed is him who honors people for their richness and humiliates them for their poverty." According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: "Your loving the poor is a part of the moral character of the Messengers, and giving preference to sit with them is one of the signs of the righteous, and running away from their company is one of the signs of the hypocrites."

According to the previous Scriptures, Allah revealed to one of His Prophets "peace be upon them": "Beware lest I might hate you, thereupon you would fall from My Sight, with the result that I would pour the worldly pleasures over you (as punishment)." A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" was in the habit of dividing among the poor and needy as much as even one hundred thousand Dirhams on one day sent to her by Mu'awiyah, Ibn Amir and others, given that her breast garment was full of patches. Her slave-girl said to her: "why have you not given me a Dirham to buy meat for you to break your fast?" she "Allah be pleased with her" said: "Had you reminded me, I would have done accordingly." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" had recommended her saying: "If you like to join me, stick to the living of the poor, and beware of sitting with the rich; and do not give up your breast garment until it is extremely worn out of patches." (At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim).

A man brought ten thousand Dirhams to Ibrahim Ibn Adham who rejected to accept it. When the man insisted he said to him: "Do you like me to erase my name from the record of the poor by ten thousand Dirhams? I would never do so."

CHAPTER THREE

EXPOSITION OF MERIT OF SOME PARTICULAR POOR FROM AMONG THE CONTENTED, SATISFIED AND TRUTHFUL

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Blessed be he who has been guided to Islam and lives only on the minimum requirements of subsistence therewith he is satisfied." (Muslim). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "O assembly of poor! Be contented, from the depth of your hearts, with (what is given to you by) Allah, perchance you would attain the reward of your poverty, otherwise, you would attain nothing." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on

the authority of Abu Hurairah). The first Hadith points out the satisfied, and the other the contented. This might give the impression that the thrifty poor shall have no reward for his poverty. But the general narrations about the superiority of poverty indicate that he shall have a reward as will be shown later. What is intended by being discontented here is to dislike that Allah Almighty holds back from him the worldly pleasures. How many a desirous for wealth to whose mind there never occurs the idea of disapproving or disliking such act of Allah Almighty. It is that aversion which makes fruitless the reward of poverty.

It is narrated on the authority of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Every thing has a key, and the key of Paradise is to love the indigent and needy for their patience: they will be the sitters of Allah Almighty on the Day of Judgement." (Ad-Daraqatni, Ibn Adi and Ibn Hibban). It is further narrated on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The dearest to Allah Almighty is the poor who is satisfied with his sustenance, and well-pleased with Allah Almighty." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "O Allah! Make the sustenance of the family of Muhammad no more than the minimum requirements of subsistence." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There is no one, be he rich or poor, but that he will be reported on the Day of Judgement to have been given sustenance in this world." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Anas). Allah Almighty revealed to Ishmael "peace be upon him": "Seek me with those heartbroken." He asked: "Who are those?" He said: "The truthful poor and indigent." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "None will be superior to the poor if he is contented." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "On the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty will say: "Where are My chosen from among My creatures?" the angels will ask: "Who are those O our Lord?" He will say: "The Muslim poor who are satisfied with My (little) gift to them, and contented with My decree (concerning them): admit them to Paradise." They then will enter, eat and drink thereof, while the other people will be still in reckoning." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami).

Those narrations point out the satisfied and contented from among the poor. As for the abstinent poor, we shall make a mention of his superiority in the second part of this book, Allah willing.

As for the traditions about content and satisfaction, there are so many, and a mention may be made of the following:

It is not hidden that covet is the opposite of satisfaction. Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "No doubt, covet leads to poverty; and carelessness (of wealth) is self-sufficiency; and whoever is careless about what is in the hands of the people, and is satisfied (with what is given to him no matter how little it might be), will inevitably dispense with them." Abu Mas'ud "Allah be pleased

with him" said: "No day comes upon you without an angel calling from underneath the Throne (of Majesty): 'O mankind! The little that suffices you is much better than the much that makes you fall in transgression." Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" said: "There is none of the people but that he has deficiency in his mind: if he is given increase (in wealth), he will remain cheerful and pleased, although his lifetime decreases by degrees along day and night, for which he is not sad. Woe to mankind! How should he get benefit from increasing wealth and decreasing lifetime?"

One of the wise men was asked: "What is the real self-sufficiency?" he said: "To have no desire (for wealth), and be contented with what suffices you." It is said that Ibrahim Ibn Adham was one of those endowed with wealth and property in Khurasan. One day he was looking from the window of his palace when he saw a man in the courtyard of the palace having a loaf from which he was eating, and when he finished he slept. He said to one of his servants: "When he gets up, bring him to me." When he got up he was brought to him, and Ibrahim said to him: "O man! Have you been hungry when you ate the loaf?" he answered in the affirmative. He further asked him: "Then, have you been satiated?" he answered in the affirmative. Ibrahim further asked him: "Then, have you slept well?" he answered in the affirmative. On that Ibrahim said to himself: "Then, what should I make with those worldly pleasures given that the soul is satisfied only with that little?"

A man came upon Amir Ibn Abd-Al-Qais and he was eating salt and grains. He said to him: "O slave of Allah! Have you been contented only with that from the entire world?" he replied: "Should I not guide you to him who has been contented with what is worse than that?" he said: "Yes." He said: "It is he who has been contented with the world in substitution for the hereafter." Muhammad Ibn Wasi was in the habit of bringing dry bread and wetting it with water and then eating it with salt, saying: "Whoever is contented from all the world only with that would never be in need of anyone."

Al-Hassan said: "Allah Almighty cursed a people whom He gave (large sustenance), and they were not true to Him." Then, he recited the following statement of Allah: " And in heaven is your Sustenance, as (also) that which you are promised. Then, by the Lord of heaven and earth, this is the very Truth, as much as the fact that you can speak intelligently to each other." (Adh-Dhariyat 22-23) one day Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" was sitting with some people when his wife came to him and said: "Are you sitting among those people? By Allah, the house has nothing at all (to eat)." He said to her: "O woman! Ahead of us is a difficult obstacle (i.e. this world) from which none will be saved but him who has nothing with him of the burdens (of wealth and property)." On that she returned home well-pleased. According to Dhu-Nun: "The closest of people to disbelief is the impatient poor."

One of the wise men was asked about his wealth, thereupon he said: "To beautify (with patience) outwardly, stick to moderation inwardly, and be careless of what is in the hands of the people." It is reported that Allah Almighty said in one of the previous Scriptures: "O mankind! If the entire world is for you, you will not

have but the sustenance (that is doomed to you). So, if I give to you the sustenance (that is doomed to you), and loaded the reckoning for the entire world on others than you, I then will have done good to you."

CHAPTER FOUR
EXPOSITION OF SUPERIORITY OF POVERTY OVER RICHNESS

It should be known to you that the people differ about that matter. Al-Junaid, Al-Khawas and the majority (of Sufis) give preference to poverty over richness. But Ibn Ata' says that the thankful rich who fulfills what is due upon him to the best is better than the patient poor. It is said that Al-Junaid invoked evil upon Ibn Ata' for his disagreement with him over that matter, thereupon he was given to affliction. We have previously shown the degrees of difference between patience and gratitude, and paved the way for seeking excellence in deeds and states, and that it is impossible to give any of them preference over the other without detail and explanation.

The same is true of the difference between poverty and richness, in which none could be given preference over the other in general. Let us say that suspicion lies in two opposing situations: One with a patient poor in one extreme, who is not greedy and thus not eager to seek property: but he is satisfied and contented; and, in the opposing extreme, a rich who spends his property on all aspects of good, and is not greedy and thus not eager to withhold property. The other situation has a greedy poor versus a greedy rich. It is not hidden that the satisfied and contented poor is superior to the greedy rich, and that the rich who spends his wealth on what is good is superior to the greedy poor.

The first situation implies a patient poor who is not greedy for property. In this situation, one might have the impression that the rich is better than the poor, for they are equal in the lack of greediness for property, and the rich excels the poor in the objects of charity that bring him closer to Allah Almighty, and the poor fails to do so. This is what Ibn Ata' thought, as we believe. But even, it is unimaginable that the rich who enjoys his wealth, even in what is permissible, is superior to the poor who is satisfied and contented. In support of that, it is narrated that the poor complained to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" of the fact that the rich had preceded them to the good deeds by their objects of charity, Hajj, Umrah and Jihad, thereupon he instructed them to say many words of glorification and magnification of Allah Almighty which would make them attain beyond the reward of the rich if they said them. But the rich learnt them and went on saying them. The poor returned once again to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and made a mention of that to him, thereupon he said: "That is the bounty of Allah Almighty which He gives to whomever He pleases." (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

When Ibn Ata' was asked about why he gave preference to the self-sufficient, he said: "The self-sufficient is better for self-sufficiency is the attribute of the Real (i.e. Allah)."

As for his first evidence, it is questionable. Indeed, the context in which the

narration is reported gives a different impression according to which the reward a poor receives from glorification and magnification is more abundant than that of the rich, whose attainment of this reward is out of the bounty of Allah Almighty which He gives to whomever He pleases.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The poor sent me as a messenger to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and when I entered upon him I said to him: "I'm the messenger of the poor to you." He said: "Welcome to you and to those from whom you have come: they are a people whom I like." He (Anas) said: "They say to you: 'O Messenger of Allah, the rich have taken the entire good for themselves: they perform Hajj and we could not do, perform Umrah and we could not do, and when they fall ill, they give the surplus of their wealth as charity, to be ammunition for them (in the hereafter and we could not do so).'" The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Report the poor from me the message that 'Whoever of you keeps patient and expects the reward from Allah Almighty will have three merits, which will not be given to the rich: the first is that in Paradise, there are mansions to which the inhabitants of Paradise will look forward in the same way as the inhabitants of the earth look forward to the stars in the sky, which none shall enter but a poor Prophet, a poor martyr, or a poor believer. The second is that the poor will enter Paradise half a day, i.e. five hundred years, before the rich. The third is: "Glory be to Allah; praise be to Allah; there is no god to be worshipped but Allah; and Allah is Greater", which, if the poor says, in no way would the rich join him even if he spends for it as much as ten thousand Dirhams. The same is true of all acts of righteousness.'" He returned and told them about what the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" had said, thereupon they said: "We have been pleased, we have been pleased."

That indicates to the fact that his statement "That is the bounty of Allah Almighty which He gives to whomever He pleases" means the extra reward given to the poor for their celebration and supplication.

As for the second evidence, i.e. that self-sufficiency is the attribute of the Real, some scholars replied to him saying: "Do you see that Allah Almighty is self-sufficient with the help of means and causes?" he failed to answer. Others replied: "No doubt, superiority is the attribute of the Real, which requires that superiority should be better than humbleness." Then, they confirmed saying: "This indicates that poverty is better than richness, for poverty is characteristic of slavery which is good for the servant, like hope and fear, unlike the attributes of Lordship over which none should dispute Him. In support of that, Allah Almighty said about Himself as narrated from Him by our Prophet "peace be upon him": "Grandeur is My upper garment and magnificence is My lower garment; and whoever disputes with Me over anyone of both, I would break him." According to Sahl: "To love honor and eternity is to share Allah in Lordship, for they are characteristic of the Lord Almighty."

In sum, it is impossible to give preference to any over the other in general. What is not intended for itself in so much as for anything else should be

viewed in relation with that thing. The world is not banned for itself in so much as for the fact that it hinders one from reaching the presence of Allah Almighty, nor is poverty required for itself in so much as for removing the obstacle that hinders from reaching the presence of Allah Almighty. Many are the rich who were not occupied by their richness from Allah Almighty like Solomon "peace be upon him", Uthman Ibn Affan and Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf "Allah be pleased with them"; and many are the poor whose poverty engaged and diverted them from the real purpose in this world, i.e. the love for Allah Almighty.

Love for Allah could not be attained before gnosis, which is impossible in the presence of the worldly occupations; and poverty, like richness, might possibly be one of the worldly engagements. That is because the real engagement is the love for this world, and the love of this world and the love for Allah Almighty could hardly gather together in the heart. The lover of a thing is engaged in it, whether in connection with or desertion from it. Moreover, his desertion from it might engage him more than his connection with it, and vice versa. To be sure, the world is the beloved of the heedless, and the one deprived of it is engaged in pursuit of it, and the one possessing it is engaged in maintaining and enjoying it.

Thus, if two are supposed to have no love for wealth in the sense that both wealth and water are equal in their sight, both the possessor and deprived would be equal. That is because each of both does not get benefit but from what satisfies his need, and to have what satisfies one's need is better than to be deprived of it. By another consideration, the poor is farther from the risk, since the affliction of prosperity is more severe than that of adversity, and it is out of protection given to one that he becomes financially unable. For this reason, the companions "Allah be pleased with them" said: "We have been tried by the affliction of adversity, and we kept patient; and we have been tried by the affliction of prosperity, but we failed to keep patient." That is the character of almost all mankind except those who rarely exist across time.

But since the religious law addresses all the people and not only these who rarely exist, and consequently, since adversity, according to that concept, is of more benefit for them all, then, richness has been scolded and condemned on the account of poverty which has been given preference and praised. The Christ "peace be upon him" said: "Look not at the property of the inhabitants of this world for the glitter of their wealth extinguishes the light of your faith." According to a good religious scholar: "Turning (the coins of) money so much affects the sweetness of faith." According to a certain narration: "Every nation has a calf (which they worship), and the calf of this (Muslim) nation is the Dirham and Dinar (i.e. the wealth)." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Hudhaifah). Certainly you know that the material from which the calf of the people of Moses "peace be upon him" was made is gold and silver.

It is only the Prophets "peace be upon them" followed by the allies and devotees of Allah Almighty that in whose sight both wealth and water, both gold and stone are equal. They attain that degree of carelessness by virtue of Allah Almighty, and after long mortification and striving. The Messenger of

Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say to this world: "Keep away from me." (Al-Hakim). It used to appear before him in her adornment. Ali "Allah be pleased with him" used to address gold and silver saying: "O yellow (gold)! Deceive anyone else other than me! O white (silver)! Deceive anyone else other than me!" he seemed to have felt the commencement of deception by those had he not seen the proof of his Lord.

This is the absolute self-sufficiency. In this context, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Richness is not to have much property; but richness is to be self-sufficient." But if this is too difficult for most of people to do, then, it is of more benefit for most of them to lose wealth, even if they are to give it in charity and spend it on what is good. That is because, having the financial capability, they would hardly be free from enjoyment of this worldly pleasures, and feeling comfort of spending money in it. All of this summons the intimacy to this world; and as much as the servant gets affable with this world, he feels aloof from the hereafter; and as much as he gets affable with anyone of his attributes, other than the attribute of gnosis of Allah Almighty, he feels aloof from Allah Almighty and from love for Him.

But on the other hand, whenever the means of intimacy to this world are cut off, the heart deserts from this world and its splendor. To be sure, if the heart deserts from everything other than Allah Almighty, and rather believes in Allah Almighty, it would be entirely devoted to Allah, for an empty heart is unimaginable. In existence, there is nothing but Allah Almighty and the other things; and whoever devotes himself to the things other than Allah, has deserted from Allah, and whoever devoted himself to Allah has deserted these things other than Him. As much as he devotes himself to anyone of both, he deserts from the other and as much as he comes close to anyone of both, he moves far from the other. Their example is like both the East and West: both are directions, and as much as one comes close to one, he becomes far from the other. Following that concept, to love this world means to dislike Allah Almighty, and vice versa.

In this way, the superiority of the richness and poverty is determined by the extent to which the hearts of the rich and poor are attached to wealth and property. If both are equal in it, they will be on the same degree. But richness is a place where one is more apt to slip and be deceived. The rich might have the false impression that his heart is detached from wealth and property, although the love for it is lurking within himself, and he feels it not unless he loses it. So, let him try himself by spending in charity all of his property: if he finds his heart inclined to it, let him know that he has been deceived by that false impression. How many a man who sold his beloved slave-girl thinking that his heart had been detached from her, and after delivering her to the purchaser, the flame of love and affection for her that was lurking in his heart was kindled in it, and he came to know that he had been deceived, and that love was lurking in his heart in the same way as fire is lurking underneath ashes.

This is the state of all the rich and wealthy except for the Prophets "peace be upon them" and the allies of Allah Almighty. Being so, let's say that poverty is

more suitable and beneficial for the people than richness, for the poor's relation and intimacy with the world is weaker. The more his relation with the world is weak, the greater the reward he receives from his glorifications and acts of worship is. The tongue movements are not intended for their own sake, but they are intended to confirm one's intimacy with the celebrated. They are more effective to raise intimacy in the heart that is empty from anything other than the celebrated more than in the engaged heart. For this reason, one of the righteous predecessors said: "The example of your worship while you are engaged in pursuit of this world is like him who extinguishes fire with grass, or him who washes his hands from the traces of fish with fish." According to Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani: "The breath taken by a poor in avoidance of a desire he could not fulfill is better than the worship of a rich for as long as one thousand years." According to Ad-Dahhak: "If one enters the market and finds a thing for which he has desire (and could not buy it) on which he keeps patient and expects the reward from Allah Almighty, it would be better for him than one thousand Dinars to be spent entirely in the Cause of Allah."

A man said to Bishr Ibn Al-Harith: "Invoke good upon me for my dependents have harmed me." He said to him: "If your dependents complain to you that they have no baking powder nor bread, then, invoke Allah at that very moment, for your invocation would be better than mine." He used to say: "The example of the worshipping rich is like a garden on a trash, and the example of the worshipping poor is like a necklace of diamond in the neck of a beautiful woman."

They disliked to listen to knowledge from the rich people. Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" said: "O Allah! I ask You to put me to humiliation when the right is taken back from my own self, and make me abstinent from what is beyond the minimum requirements of living." If one like As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" in his perfection was cautious of this world, then, how should one doubt that losing the money is more beneficial than having it, given that the rich in his best case takes what is lawful and spends on what is good? But even, he will suffer from a long reckoning on the Day of Judgement, and whoever is called to account would inevitably be punished. This is why Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf "Allah be pleased with him" delayed from Paradise for he was engaged in reckoning as seen by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him".

For the same reason, Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I do not like to have a shop near the gate of the mosque from which I gain a daily profit of fifty Dinars which I spend entirely in charity in the Cause of Allah provided that no single prayer or supplication would escape me." He was asked: "Then, what do you dislike in it?" he said: "The long reckoning because of it." According to Sufyan: "The poor chose three things, and the rich chose another three things. The poor chose self-comfort, heart disengagement (from the worldly benefits), and light reckoning; whereas the rich chose self-trouble, heart engagement (in the worldly benefits and enjoyments), and severe reckoning."

As for Ibn Ata's opinion that the self-sufficiency is better for it is one of the attributes of the Real (Allah), it is true, provided that the servant, in that concept, is self-sufficient from both the existence and absence of money equally. But should he be self-sufficient with its existence, and insufficient with its absence, then, by no means would his self-sufficiency be equal to that of Allah Almighty, for Allah Almighty is self-sufficient by Himself and not by anything else perishable like money. Furthermore, that Allah is self-sufficient but not with means and incidents is true in condemnation of a rich who is self-sufficient only with the existence of money. That the attributes of the Real (Allah) are unfitting for the servant is not true, for knowledge is one of His attributes, and it is the best characteristic for the servant, and the utmost perfection of a servant is to endeavor to acquire the morals of Allah Almighty.

I heard one of the Sheikhs saying: "If anyone asks you the way to Allah Almighty, then, before cutting the way, the ninety-nine names of Allah Almighty become attributes for him, i.e. he would have a share from each one." But the superiority is unfitting for the servant, for to show grandeur to him who deserves it not is not among the attributes of Allah Almighty. But to show superiority to him who deserves it, like the believer's superiority over the disbeliever, the learned over the ignorant, and the obedient over the disobedient, it is fitting for him. It is true that superiority might lead to arrogance, haughtiness and vanity, but in this case, it becomes not one of the attributes of Allah Almighty. Superiority of Allah means that He is the Greatest of all things, a fact which He knows well.

The servant is ordered to pursue the highest rank (among all living beings), as long as he has the power to get it, but with truth and not falsehood and confusion. The servant has to know that the believer is more grand than the disbeliever, the obedient than the disobedient, the learned than the ignorant, and the man than the animals, plants and non-living organisms, and closer to Allah Almighty. It is in this concept only that the attribute of grandeur becomes fitting for him. But unfortunately, this is of the things unknown to the man for it is determined by the conclusion of his deed which none knows but Allah Almighty. Being so, it is not fitting for him to think himself in a rank higher than that of the disbeliever, for the deeds of the disbeliever might possibly be concluded with faith, and his deeds with disbelief. Thus, this thought is unfitting for him due to the shortage of his knowledge of the consequences and ends.

In sum, if both the existence and absence of wealth is equal to the man, that is a kind of independence, that matches, in some point, the self-sufficiency with which Allah Almighty is described. In this case, it is a virtue. But the self-sufficiency only with the existence of money has no virtue. That is an explication of the state of the satisfied and contented poor compared with that of the thankful rich.

The second situation: the comparison between the state of the thrifty poor and that of a thrifty rich. Suppose there is one person who petitions and seeks for wealth, but at the same time, he does not have it. But then he finds it. He

will have two states: the state of absence (of money) and the state of existence (of money). Which of both his states then is better? In answering that question, we should consider: if what he petitions is necessary for his living as to provide for his sustenance and enable him to undertake his religious duties, then, the state of existence would be better. That is because the poverty engages him in seeking for sustenance, and the sustenance petitioner could neither think nor celebrate (Allah) but to the extent to which he becomes disengaged from petition; and the one who has what suffices him has the power to do both (meditation and celebration). This is why the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "O Allah! Make the sustenance of the family of Muhammad "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"no more than the minimum requirements of living." He "peace be upon him" further said: "Poverty is about to lead to disbelief)." He means of course that kind of poverty with which one does not have what is even necessary for his living.

But if what is brought is beyond the need, or what is sought or petitioned is in proportion to the need but will not be used to enable one to undertake his religious duties, then, the state of poverty will be better and more beneficial. That is because both the rich and poor have become equal in thriftiness and love for money, and in the fact that each of them does not intend to seek its aid to undertake his religious duties, and that each of them is not vulnerable to sin because of richness or poverty. But they differ in the fact that the rich has become affable with what he has, whose love is confirmed in his heart, with the result that he rests assured to the world; whereas the lacking who does not have even the necessities deserts from the world which becomes in his sight like the prison that he wishes to get rid of.

If two men, equal in all worldly things, come out of the world, with one of them more reliant on this world, his state then would be more detrimental, for his heart will turn to the world and feel aloof from the hereafter as much as he is affable with the world. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The Holy Spirit inspired to me that 'It is the same for you to love whomever you love, for you are going to leave him (by death sooner or later).'" This indicates to what extent the departure from the beloved is extremely detrimental. For this reason, you should love Him Who never leaves you, i.e. Allah Almighty, and love not that which will inevitably leave you, i.e. this world. If you love this world, you would necessarily dislike (to die and) meet Allah Almighty.

It has become clear that poverty is more noble, more beneficial and more suitable to all the people, except in two cases: the first is richness like that of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" according to which both the existence and absence of money are equally the same, with its existence being more advantageous for it benefits the poor, indigent and needy among men. The second is the poverty with which one does not have what is necessary for his living for it is about to lead to disbelief, in which no good lies under all circumstances, except if its existence will sustain him and enable him to seek the aid of his power and life to commit sins and misdeeds, and were he to die out of

hunger, his sins would be fewer. So, it is more suitable to him to die out of hunger and do not find what helps him commit sins.

There remains the comparison between a greedy poor who is extremely eager to seek property and he has no other concern, and a rich who is less eager to preserve and maintain his property, whose grief for losing it is less than the poor's for his poverty. It seems more apparent that they are far from Allah Almighty to the extent to which their grief for losing money and poverty is strong; and they are close to Allah Almighty to the extent to which their grief for it is weak. The full knowledge of that is with Allah Almighty.

CHAPTER FIVE
EXPOSITION OF ETIQUETTES OF THE POOR IN HIS POVERTY

It should be known to you that there are many etiquettes to be observed by the poor in himself, in his mixing with people and in his behaviors.

As far as his internal etiquettes are concerned, he should not dislike the poverty in terms of being an act of Allah with which He has tried him, i.e. he should not hate the act of Allah itself even though he dislikes poverty. His example is like the one who gets himself cupped: although he dislikes cupping for it aches him, but he does dislike neither the act of the cupper, nor the cupper himself, to whom he is under obligation (for he remedies him). That is the least degree, and it is obligatory; and its opposite is unlawful, and makes fruitless the reward of poverty. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O assembly of poor! Be contented, from the depth of your hearts, with (what is given to you by) Allah, perchance you would attain the reward of your poverty, otherwise, you would attain nothing." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Higher than that is not to dislike poverty in so much as to be contented with it. Much higher is to petition poverty and be pleased with it, due to one's knowledge of the evils of richness, and, at the same time, to rely within himself on Allah Almighty, and be confident of Him that what is necessary for his living would inevitably come to him, and to dislike what is beyond the minimum requirements of living. Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Poverty might be a punishment or a reward from Allah Almighty. Among the signs of its being a reward is that the poor makes good his manners on it, obeys his Lord with it, not to complain of it, and to thank Allah Almighty for his state, whatever it might be. Among the signs of its being a punishment is to make evil his manners, disobey his Lord with it, complain of it more often, and be displeased with the fate of Allah concerning it."

This means that not all poor are praiseworthy, but the praiseworthy among them is him who is not displeased with poverty, but rather pleased and contented with poverty, due to his knowledge of its fruits. It is said that "No servant is given anything of this world but that it will be said to him: 'Take it on three thirds: occupation, concern and long reckoning.'"

As for his outward etiquettes, it is to show abstaining and patience, and hide complaint and annoyance of poverty, for he is indeed required to conceal his poverty, and screen that he conceals it. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's

blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty likes the abstaining poor who has dependents (for whom he is responsible)." In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " the ignorant man thinks, because of their restraint, that they are free from want. You shall know them by their (unfailing) mark: they beg not importunately from all and sundry." (Al-Baqarah 273)

﴿ يَحْسَبُهُمُ ٱلْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَآءَ مِنَ ٱلتَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُم بِسِيمَٰهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔلُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا ﴿٢٧٣﴾ ﴾

According to Sufyan: "The best of deeds is to beautify oneself with patience when afflicted with disaster." According to another scholar: "To screen poverty is one of the treasures of righteousness."

As for his etiquettes in behaviors, it is not to humble himself before a rich just because of his self-sufficiency: on the contrary, he should give him the impression of superiority over him. Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said: "How good is the rich's humbleness before the poor in expectation for the reward of Allah Almighty; and better than it is the poor's superiority over him out of confidence of Allah Almighty." More less in rank is not to mix or sit with the rich, for this is the first commencement of covet. According to Sufyan Ath-Thawri: "When the poor mixes with the rich, then, you should know that he is a hypocrite; and if he mixes with the ruler, you should know that he is a thief." According to a Gnostic: "If the poor mixes with the rich, his handhold would be untied; and when he covets of them, his infallibility would vanish; and when he finds tranquility with them, he would go astray." Therefore, the poor should not refrain from making public the truth, out of adulation of the rich and covet of their gifts.

As for his etiquettes in his deeds, he should not weaken or stop from his acts of worship because of poverty, nor desist from giving in charity what is beyond his need, no matter how little it might be. This is indeed the effort of him who has but little, which is better than a lot of money to be spent by the rich. In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Zaid Ibn Aslam that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "A single Dirham to be given in charity might be better in the Sight of Allah Almighty than one hundred thousand Dirhams." It was said to him: "How is that O Messenger of Allah?" he "peace be upon him" said: "A rich brought out of his property one hundred thousand Dirhams and gave it in charity; and a poor brought a single Dirham with good pleasure out of two Dirhams more than which he possessed nothing, and gave it in charity. In this way, the giver of the single Dirham became better than the giver of the one hundred thousand Dirhams." (An-Nasa'i on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

He further should not save money: But rather take what satisfies his need and give the remaining in charity. There are three degrees about saving: one is to save only for his day and night; and this is the rank of the sincere lovers of truth. The second is to save for as long as forty days, and what is more is included in the long hope. This was understood by the religious scholars from the appointment given by Allah Almighty to Moses "peace be upon him". This is the rank of the pious. The third is to save for as long as one year, and this is the maximum

period allowed for saving; and this is the rank of the righteous. Whoever saves for a period longer than that belongs to the laymen and not the private among men. The self-sufficiency of the righteous whose reassurance is weak is as much as the sustenance of his year; and the self-sufficiency of the private is as much as the sustenance of forty days; and the self-sufficiency of the private of the private is only the sustenance of a day and a night.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" divided his women according to those three ranks: He gave some of them the sustenance of a complete year, and others the sustenance of forty days and nights, i.e. the division of A'ishah and Hafsah "Allah be pleased with them"

CHAPTER SIX

EXPOSITION OF ETIQUETTES OF THE POOR IN ACCEPTING GIFTS WHEN GIVEN TO HIM WITHOUT BEGGING

The poor should observe three things when a gift is given to him: The property itself from which the gift is given, the purpose of the giver, and his rationale for accepting it.

As for the property, it should be lawful, completely free from all suspicions. If it is suspicious, he should avoid taking it. We have mentioned in the Book of the Lawful and Unlawful the degrees of suspicion, and what should be avoided, and what is desirable to be left thereof.

As far as the purpose of the giver is concerned, it might be to please his heart and seek his love through the gift, or seek reward through the object of charity or Zakat, or seek reputation and to be heard and seen of men, wither alone or in combination with other purposes.

As for the first purpose, i.e. the gift, there is no harm in accepting it, in imitation of the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", provided that the taker should not become under obligation to the giver, in which case, it should be rejected. If it is learnt that he would be under obligation for a part and not all of it, let him accept that part and return the other. It is related that once cooking butter, yogurt and a ram were given as a gift to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" thereupon he accepted the cooking butter and yogurt, and returned the ram. (Ahmad on the authority of Ya'li Ibn Murrah). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further used to accept the gift from some and return it from others. (Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah). In this respect he "peace be upon him" said: "I intended not to accept a gift but from a Qurashi, a Thaqafi, an Ansari, or a Dawsi." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah). A group of Followers did the same in imitation of him.

Once, a parcel of fifty Dirhams was brought as a gift to Fath Al-Mawsili, thereupon he said: Ata' reported to us from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that he said: "Whoever received sustenance without begging and he returned it, has indeed returned it to Allah Almighty." Then, he opened the parcel and took a Dirham from it and returned the remaining of it. Al-Hassan used to relate this narration when a case of money and a package of fine clothing of Khurasan were brought to him by a man thereupon

he returned them and said: "Whoever sits in this position of mine, and accepts from the people the like of that would meet Allah Almighty on the Day of Judgement having no share (in the hereafter)." This means that the religious scholar and preacher should be more cautious of accepting gifts. But Al-Hassan, at the same time, used to accept gifts from his companions.

Ibrahim At-Taimi used to ask some of his companions for one or two Dirhams, given that others offered to him hundreds of Dirhams, and he rejected it. It was the habit of one that if he was given something by his friend, he would say to him: "Keep it with you and consider whether I have become better in your sight after accepting it than I was before accepting it, tell me, otherwise, I would not accept it." The sign of that is one feels it difficult upon himself if his gift is returned to him, and rather becomes pleased if it is accepted, seeing himself under obligation to his friend who accepts his gift. But if the giver feels that the taker should be under obligation to him because of his gift, then, taking it is permissible, but unfavorable in the sight of the poor who are sincere lovers of truth.

Bishr said: "I have never asked anyone for anything except Sari As-Saqati, for in my sight he is really abstinent from this world: he always is pleased with what he gives out, and disturbed by what remains in his hand; and when I ask him for something, I help him do what he loves." On another occasion, a man from Khurasan brought some money to Al-Junaid and asked him to devour it. He said: "Let me distribute it among the needy and indigent." The man said: "No, I do not like this." Al-Junaid said: "Then, to which time should I live to be able to devour all of this money?" the man said: "I do not like you to consume it on vinegar and grains, but on sweet and delicious kinds of food." He accepted it from him. The man from Khurasan said to him: "I do not find anyone in Baghdad more trustworthy than you." He replied: "Such should not be accepted but from the like of you."

The second purpose is the mere reward, through the objects of charity or Zakat. In this way, he has to consider himself whether he deserves Zakat, and if it seems suspicious to him, then, accepting it would be suspicious. We have mentioned the details of that in the Book of the Mysteries of Zakat. If he is given by way of charity for the sake of his religion, then, he should consider his religion from within: if he commits a sin in secret and should the giver know it he would not give him, then, accepting it would be unlawful, like the case in which he is given for the giver thinks he is a religious scholar, and he is not so, then, taking it would be rendered unlawful.

The third purpose is to seek reputation and intend to be seen and heard of men. Being so, the poor should disappoint his purpose and reject to take from him in order not to help him achieve his corrupt purpose. Sufyan Ath-Thawri was in the habit of returning what he was given saying: "Were I to know that they do not mention it out of pride, I would accept it." One was blamed for returning what he was given and he said: "I indeed return their gifts out of pity and sympathy for them, and sincerity to them, for they mention it out of pride of it, and like it to be known among the public, with the result that their wealth would vanish with no reward."

As regards his rationale for taking, he should consider whether or not he is in need of it. If he is in need of it, and at the same time, it is free from all suspicions and evils we have previously mentioned, then, it would be better for him to take it. In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The reward received by the giver out of his abundant wealth is no greater than that received by the taker if he is in need of it." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Umar). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever is given anything of that property, with neither begging nor greed, then, it is a sustenance brought by Allah to him." So, "Let not him return it" according to another version.

According to a religious scholar: "Whoever is given and does not take is like him who begs and is not given." Sari As-Saqati used to give gifts to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. Once, Ahmad returned it, thereupon Sari said to him: "O Ahmad! Beware of the evil of returning, for it is more grievous than the evil of taking." Ahmad asked him to repeat his statement to him once again, and he did accordingly, thereupon Ahmad said to him: "I have not returned your gift to you but because I have the sustenance of a month. So, keep it for me with you, and after a month, give it to me."

According to a certain religious scholar: "It is feared that returning with need might lead to the punishment of testing with covet, or any other allegation." But if what is brought to him is beyond his need, he is either responsible for himself only, or in charge of spending on the poor and needy due to his natural kindness and generosity. If he is responsible only for himself, then, there is no need for taking it, particularly if he is following the way to the hereafter, otherwise he would be among those who follow their own inclinations. To be sure, whoever hovers round the protected zone is about to fall in it.

As regards taking, one has two positions: the first is to take in public and return in secret, or to take in public and spend on the poor in secret. That is the position of the sincere lovers of truth, and it is indeed difficult on the soul, and none endures it but he who is self-reassured by discipline.

The second is not to take, and rather let the giver direct it to him who is more needy than him, or to take and convey it to him who is more needy than him, doing both either in secret or in public. We have previously mentioned whether it is better to show or disclose taking in the Book of the Mysteries of Zakat and some rules of poverty.

That Ahmad Ibn Hanbal abstained from accepting the gift of Sari As-Saqati, was because he was not in need of it, for he had his sustenance for a month. So, he rejected to engage himself in taking it, and storing more sustenance, and rather preferred that it be given to him who might be more needy than him. He thereby intended to avoid whatever evils and risks that might arise.

In this respect, it is related that one living in Mecca said: "I prepared many Dirhams to spend in the Cause of Allah Almighty when I heard a poor saying in a very low tone after finishing from circumambulation: "I am hungry as You see; I am naked as You see: so, what do You see O He Who sees and is

not seen?" I looked and behold! He had two pieces of cloth which hardly covered his body. I said to myself: "There is no place for my Dirhams better than this." I carried them to him and he looked at them and took only five Dirhams and said: "Four for both upper and lower garments, and one to spend (on food) for three days, and I have no need for the rest." So, he returned it. On the coming night, I saw him having new upper and lower garments, and something suspicious arose in myself about him. He turned to me and took hold of my hand, and made me circumambulate with him for a week, each round on a kind of diamond from among the land's minerals clattering underneath our feet up to the ankles, including gold, silver and pearl, and all of this was not visible to the people. He said: "I have been given all of this, but I abstained in it, and I preferred to take from the hands of the people, for the former is but burdens and source of temptation, and the latter brings about mercy and blessing to the people."

The point is that what is beyond your need comes to you by way of affliction and trial so that Allah Almighty looks at you to see what you would do with it. At the same time, what satisfies your need only comes to you out of pity and sympathy for you. So, do not be heedless of the difference between sympathy and trial. Allah Almighty said: " That which is on earth We have made but as a glittering show for the earth, in order that We may test them, as to which of them are best in conduct." (Al-Kahf 7)

﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۝٧ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Mankind has no right but in three: food to sustain him, a garment to cover his private parts, and a house to shelter him; and what is beyond those would draw reckoning upon him." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Uthman Ibn Affan). Then, in taking only your needs from those three, you would be rewarded, and in taking what is beyond your need you would be vulnerable to reckoning, if you do not disobey Allah, and to punishment if you disobey Allah.

It is out of testing to have the determination to leave a lawful pleasure, in order thereby to come close to Allah Almighty, and break the appetites of your self. But then, this pleasure might come to you effortlessly without endeavor to get it as an examination of the resolute power of your determination. But it is preferable for you to abstain from it, for if the soul is allowed to repeal determination, it would gradually get accustomed to repeal the covenant and pledge, and return to its nature and become too difficult to overpower once again. So, to leave it is important, and it is asceticism. But if you take it and spend it on the needy and indigent, it would be the utmost degree of asceticism, which none is able to achieve but the sincere lovers of truth.

But if you are in the habit of generosity, openhandedness and taking care of the poor and needy, then, there is no harm to take what is beyond your needs, for it indeed would not be beyond the need of the poor, and hasten to spend it on them, and save it not, for to withhold it even for as short as a single night brings about temptation and seduction, as it might appeal to your heart, and seem to you to keep it for yourself. A group of people betook themselves to serve the poor as

a means of increasing their property and enjoying food and drink; and this is, to be sure, the evident destruction.

Whoever aims to show sympathy for the poor, thereby seeking the reward, there is no harm to loan, depending on the good assumption of Allah Almighty, and not depending upon the wrongful rulers. If Allah Almighty bestows anything lawful upon him, he would fulfill his debt, and if he dies before fulfilling it, Allah Almighty would fulfill it on his behalf, provided that he should disclose his financial status to the loaner: He should neither deceive him nor give him false promises about the time of fulfillment. The debt of such a man should be fulfilled from the treasury, and from Zakat. Allah Almighty said: " Let the man of means spend according to his means: And the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief." (At-Talaq 7)

﴿ لِيُنفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّن سَعَتِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُۥ فَلْيُنفِقْ مِمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَآ ءَاتَىٰهَا ۚ سَيَجْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

It is said that it means to sell one of his two garments, or to loan depending upon his majesty, and this is of what Allah Almighty has given him.

One of the scholars said: "There are from Allah's servants such as spend according to their means, and such as spend according to their good assumption of Allah Almighty." One of the wealthy died and bequeathed that his wealth should be divided among three kinds of persons: the strong, the generous and the self-sufficient." It was asked: "Who are those?" it was said in reply to that: "The strong are those who rely on Allah Almighty. The generous are those who have good assumption of Allah Almighty. The self-sufficient are those who devote themselves wholeheartedly to Allah Almighty."

In sum, once those conditions concerning himself, the wealth, and the giver, are available, let him take what is given to him, seeing that what he takes is from Allah Almighty and not from the giver, for the giver is but an intermediary subjugated by Allah to give, in which he is forced to do, due to the motives, beliefs and wills that are invested with authority over him.

It is related that a man invited Shaqiq among fifty of his companions to a banquet and when the food was served before them Shaqiq said to his companions: "This man tells you that whoever of you does not see that it is I who have made and served this food to you, then, my food would be forbidden to him." All of them left except for a young man less than them in rank. The house lord said to Shaqiq: "What have you intended by that which you said?" he said: "I have liked to test the degree of monotheism of my companions."

It is further related that Moses "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! You have made my sustenance in the hands of the children of Israel: one of them gives me the early meal one day, and another the evening meal one night and so on!" Allah Almighty revealed to him: "As such I do with My allies: I make their sustenance in the hands of the idle among My servants in order that they would be rewarded for them."

So the giver should be seen only as somebody subjugated and hired by Allah Almighty to give (what is doomed to be given by Allah). We ask Allah to guide us to what pleases Him.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EXPOSITION OF PROHIBITION OF BEGGING WITH NO NECESSITY; AND ETIQUETTES THEREIN IF ONE IS FORCED TO DO

It should be known to you that begging was forbidden by many narrations although concession might be given in some cases. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The beggar has a right (to take) even if he is coming on horse." (Abu Dawud on the authority of Al-Hussain Ibn Ali). He "peace be upon him" further said: "Return the beggar with anything even (as trifling as) a burnt hoof." (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Umm Majid). Had begging been absolutely prohibited, it would not have been permissible to aid him as a transgressor in his transgression by giving him.

But even, the reality is that begging is, in principle, prohibited unless if there is a dire necessity, or a need close to necessity, in the absence of which, it becomes prohibited. We say that it is prohibited in principle for it could hardly be free from three prohibited things:

The first is to complain of Allah Almighty. To be sure, begging is to show poverty, and the shortage of the favor of Allah Almighty on the beggar. As well as if the slave begs, he disgraces his master, when people begs from each other, they indeed disgrace Allah Almighty. This should be prohibited unless there is a dire necessity, in the same way as the dead becomes lawful when one is forced by necessity.

The second is that the beggar humiliates himself to others than Allah Almighty. It is not fitting for a faithful believer to humiliate himself to anyone other than Allah Almighty. But he has to humiliate himself to Allah, his Creator and Protector, for to humiliate oneself to Allah is to honor oneself, unlike to humiliate himself to anyone else, for all the people are but servants like him. So, he should not put himself to humiliation before them unless there is a dire necessity. To be sure, begging puts the beggar to humiliation before the begged.

The third is that he often harms the begged who might not be pleased to give him. If he gives out of feeling shy of the beggar, or by way of showing off, it would be unlawful for the taker to take it; and if he withholds it, he might possibly feel shy and be harmed by prevention, as he would think himself among the niggards. Giving would decrease his property, whereas withholding would decrease his majesty, and both are harmful; and it is the beggar who causes such harm, which is unlawful in itself unless there is a dire necessity.

Having understood those three forbidden things, you would surely comprehend the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Begging the people is among the immoralities, and no immorality other than it has been made lawful by Allah." Consider how he "peace be upon him" called it immorality. It is not hidden that immorality

could not be made permissible unless there is a dire necessity, like drinking wine which is permissible only when food chokes one and he finds nothing other than it.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever begs although he is free of want, has indeed gained much of the pieces of the fire of Hell." (Abu Dawud and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Sahl Ibn Al-Hanzali). He "peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever begs the people and he has what makes him free of want, would come on the Day of Judgement having his face of bones smashing with no flesh to cover it" or (according to another version), "with his begging in the form of scratches and slashes in his face." (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud). Those are clear statements about the severe prohibition of begging.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" accepted the pledge of allegiance from some people on Islam, provided that they should hearken and obey, and then he said to them a hidden word, and then resumed: "And beg nothing from the people." (Muslim on the authority of Awf Ibn Malik Al-Ashja'i). the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" more often commanded the people to refrain from begging and said: "Whoever begs us, we would give him, and whoever seeks self-sufficiency, Allah Almighty would make him self-sufficient; and whoever does not beg us is indeed dearer to us." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Make yourselves self-sufficient from the people; and whoever reduces his begging is good." They said: "And even from you O Messenger of Allah?" he answered in the affirmative. (Al-Bazzar and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Abbas). Once, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" heard a man begging after evening, thereupon he asked one of his people to serve him with supper. When he did he heard him begging once again, thereupon he said to the man from his people: "Have I not told you to serve the man with supper?" He said: "I have done." Umar "Allah be pleased with him" looked and behold! There was a bag full of bread underneath his hand. On that he said: "You are not a beggar, but a trader." He then took the bag and distributed the bread among the camels assigned to charity and beat him with the stick and asked him not to do so once again. Had his begging not been unlawful, he would not have beaten him, nor taken the bag from him.

A narrow-minded jurist might estrange that behaviour of Umar saying: "To beat him with the stick is to discipline him and it is permissible under Sharia. But it was not fitting for Umar "Allah be pleased with him" to take the property of the man for it is confiscation. Then, how did Umar render it permissible?" this argument, to be sure, indicates to shortage of religious knowledge and understanding. Where are all the religious jurists from the religious knowledge and understanding of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" and well-awareness of the mysteries of the religion of Allah Almighty and the interests and benefits of His servants? do you see that he did not learn that confiscation is impermissible in the religion of Allah? Or do you see that he learnt

it and rendered it permissible out of anger, thereby he disobeyed Allah Almighty? Allah forbid that he might do so! Do you see that he wanted to scold the man in a way that was not prescribed by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"? How far he was from that!

What seemed to him was that the man was self-sufficient of begging, and whoever gave him would do so, thinking he was in need. But since the man was false, this property did not become his own, for he took it by way of dissimilation. Then, it was to be given back to its real owners; and since it was difficult to be distinguished, as well as to know the owners, it became property with no owner, and thus it was incumbent to spend it on the public interests of Muslims; and the camels assigned to charity and their fodder are among the public interests. The point is that the beggar who takes anything from the people by deception, i.e. after giving them the false impression of being needy and he is not so, then, what he takes does not belong to him and it rather should be taken back from him. This behavior of Umar confirmed that meaning of which a lot of religious jurists are heedless.

Having known that begging would be made permissible only when there is a dire necessity, then, you should know that one might be forced by necessity, have a dire need or a light need, or be self-sufficient of a thing. Those are four cases:

The first case in which one is forced by necessity, is like the begging of the hungry when he fears death or ailment for himself, the begging of the naked when he is exposed and has nothing to screen his body. It is permissible as long as the other conditions are available, i.e. the thing to be begged is permissible, the one from whom it is begged is well-pleased inwardly, and the beggar is unable to earn his living. To be sure, begging is forbidden to him who is able to earn his living, except in the case of the student, when the study takes up all his time. But in general, whoever could write and read is able to earn living through writing.

As for the self-sufficient, it applies to him who asks for a thing and he has the like or many likes of it. To be sure, his begging is prohibited. This and the previous case are clear.

As for him who has a dire need, it is like the patient who needs medicine, and although no death is feared for him if he does not use it immediately, at least he is probably vulnerable to risk. The same applies to him who has a cloak without a shirt underneath it in the winter and chill harms him but not to the point that forces him by necessity. Similarly, the one who begs to hire a vehicle given that he could hardly walk: Although begging might be permissible for him for he is in dire need, it is preferable to leave begging, and by begging, he leaves what is preferable. Anyway, his begging is not unfavorable as long as he is true to it, saying, for example: "I have no shirt underneath my cloak, and chill harms me in such a way as I could endure even though with trouble." If he is true, then, his truthfulness would be expiation for his begging, Allah willing.

As for the case of the light need, it is like one's begging for a shirt to put on to screen the holes of his garment from the eyes of the people when he comes

out of the house, or him who begs condiment and he has the bread, or begs to hire a horse on the way and he has as much as enables him to hire a donkey, etc. If such begs by way of dissimilation, i.e. he tries to show to the people whom he begs a need different from his real one, his begging then would be unlawful. If he does not and rather there is anything of the three forbidden things, i.e. the complaint (of poverty), self-humiliation, and harming him whom he begs, then, his begging would be also unlawful, since such a light need is alone not sufficient to make permissible those forbidden things. If there is nothing of those, it would be permissible, though unfavorable.

You may ask: "Then, how could you free begging from all those forbidden things?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that complaint (of poverty) might be averted by giving thanks to Allah Almighty, and being self-sufficient of anyone other than Him. One should not beg like the begging of the needy, but rather he might say: "I am free of want with what I have. But my reckless soul requires me to have a garment to put on over mine, and it is extra beyond the need." In this way, he would not be a maker of complaint (of poverty).

In order to avoid humiliation, let him ask his father, relative, or friend he knows he would not contempt him, nor would his position decrease in his eyes because of begging. Let him also ask the generous man who has prepared his wealth for those things and is pleased with the like of this beggar and becomes under obligation to him because of taking from him. In this way, humiliation would be removed from him, for humiliation is correlated with favor.

In order to avoid harming, he should not designate a particular person by begging: But rather, let him make his speech indirectly, so that none would take the initiative to give but he who has a true desire for doing so willingly and with good pleasure. If there is among the present people a respected person who would be blamed in case he does not give, this would be a kind of harming. He might give only for fear of blame, and were he not to be blamed, he would not give. In case he begs a particular person, he should speak indirectly and with reference, giving a way for him to claim to take no heed if he likes to do so. But if he does not claim to take no heed, and he is able to do it, it would be out of his true desire and good pleasure. Furthermore, one should beg only him who never feels shy of him once he returns him empty or claims to take no heed of his speech. As well as feeling shy of the beggar is harmful, showing off with anyone other than the beggar is also harmful.

You may ask: "If he takes it, knowing that what caused the giver to give is only the feeling of shyness either of him or of the present people, and but for this feeling he would not have given him anything, then, should what he takes be rendered lawful or suspicious?" in reply to that, let me say that it is evidently unlawful, and there is no difference among the religious scholars about it. It is subject to the same ruling of taking the money of another by force or confiscation. There is indeed no difference between beating the surface of a person's skin with the lash or beating his heart with the feeling of shyness. Beating the heart is more harmful and detrimental than beating the surface of the skin.

It is impermissible to claim that he has been pleased with giving it outwardly, depending upon the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "I only judge depending upon your outward behaviors and Allah is responsible for the inner secrets." This is the necessity of judgement to decide the cases, for the foes could hardly be brought back to their inner secrets and thoughts. For this reason, they were forced to judge depending upon the apparent speech of the tongue although it more often tells lies; and it is the necessity of judgement that forced to it. But this is different from the case in issue, in which the only judge is Allah the Judge of all judges on what is between the servant and his Lord Almighty, and the hearts to Him are like the tongues to all the other judges.

So, you do not consider but your heart in such cases, even if the people give you their opinions differently. The religious Mufti instructs the ruler and judge to judge in the world of the visibles, whereas the Mufti of the hearts is only the learned of the hereafter, and with the help of his fatwa is the salvation from the punishment of the hereafter, as well as with the fatwa of the religious jurist is the salvation from the punishment of this world. If, after all of this, he takes it under compulsion (of the giver), by no means he would be its owner in what is between him and Allah Almighty, and it becomes incumbent upon him to return it to its owner. If its owner feels shy of taking it back, the taker should give him as a gift something in compensation for it. If he does not accept his gift, he should return it to his heirs. If it is damaged in his hand, its warranty remains due upon him in what is between him and Allah Almighty, whereas he is disobedient by disposing of it, as well as by begging that caused this harm from the beginning.

You may ask: "That is an inward thing too difficult to learn. So, what is the way of salvation from it? A beggar might think that the giver is pleased, although he is not so inwardly." In reply to it, let me say that it is for this reason that the pious left begging entirely. They never took anything from anyone at all. Bishr never took a thing from anyone at all except for As-Saqati. In justification, he said: "I take from him for I learn that he is pleased with giving out the money and (by taking from him) I help him do what he likes to do." For this reason also, begging was disapproved by them, and abstention from it was confirmed. The beggar's necessity might cause harm to him who he begs. The beggar might be on the threshold of death, and he has no way of deliverance but to beg, and he finds none to give him but under compulsion. In this way, it is made permissible for him just as eating the flesh of swine and the dead is made permissible for him who is forced by necessity.

But even, abstention was always the way of the pious among men. There were also some masters of hearts whose insight enabled them to perceive the states of men, thereupon they accepted to take from some and not from others. Some of them did not take but from their friends, and others took some and returned some of what was given to them, as the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did with the ram, cooking butter and yogurt, given that it was brought to them without begging, for what is given without begging indicates

to the true desire and good pleasure of the giver.

They indeed abstained from begging at all except in two cases:

The first is the dire necessity. Three from among the Prophets begged when they were forced by dire necessity, i.e. Solomon, Moses and Al-Khadir "peace be upon them". Undoubtedly, they begged only him whom they knew to have wished to give them.

The other is that they begged their friends and brothers , from whom they used to take what they needed without permission, for the masters of hearts knew, for certain, that what is intended is the pleasure of the heart and not the utterance of the tongue. They confided that their friends and brothers rejoiced at taking it easy with them. They asked them only when they doubted whether or not they had what they wanted from them, otherwise, they took what they needed without asking.

However, what makes begging permissible is to know that he whom you beg is in such a state as were he to learn your need, he would hasten to fulfill your need before you beg him, and the impact of your begging on him is that it just lets him know your need. But it is impermissible to move his emotion by means of shyness and trickery. The beggar is encountered by two cases: the first is that in which there is no doubt about the internal pleasure of the giver; and the other is that in which there is no doubt about his aversion. As for the first case, taking is lawful, whereas it is illegal in the other. But in between those two cases, there are many states in which there is doubt. So, let him seek the advice of his heart, and leave what arouses suspicion in his heart, for it is sinful, to that in which he has no doubt.

It is easy to know that through the presumptions and states, but easy only on him who has a good and deep insight versus a weak desire and appetite. But if his insight is weak, and his desire and greed strong, then, he would see only what befits his purpose, and make no heed of the presumption indicative of aversion. It is only with the like of those subtleties that one comes to understand well the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The best (and most lawful) thing to eat is what one gets from his own earnings." He "peace be upon him" was given the gift of the shortest expressions that carry the widest and most comprehensive meanings.

To be sure, whoever has no earnings, nor wealth he has inherited from the property of his father or anyone of his relatives, let him eat from what is in the hands of the people. If he is given without begging, he then will be given depending on his religion. But if he is in such a state as were his inside to be disclosed, he would not be given depending on his religion (as he would prove wicked), then, what he takes would be rendered unlawful. Furthermore, were he to be given with begging, where is such as pleases him with giving once he is begged? Where is he who restricts his begging only to the limit of his dire necessity? If you inspect the states of those who eat from what is in the hands of the people, you would find the greatest portion of it illegal, since the good (and lawful) is that which you eat from your own earnings, or from what you have inherited.

It is almost impossible to combine abstention and eating from what is in the hands of the people. We ask Allah Almighty to remove our covet of anyone else other than Him, and make us self-sufficient with the lawful from the unlawful in His Sight, and with His bounty from anything else, by His favor and extensive generosity: He has power over what He pleases.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EXPOSITION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH SELF-SUFFICIENCY MAKES BEGGING UNLAWFUL

It should be known to you that the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Whoever begs and he is self-sufficient has indeed begged pieces of fire: so, let him beg much (if he so likes) or little (if he so likes) thereof" is a clear proclamation for prohibition. But the extent to which one is self-sufficient is difficult to determine, and it is not up to us to fix the amounts, since it is learnt from the sunnah. It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Be self-sufficient with the self-sufficiency of Allah Almighty of anything else." They asked: "What is that?" he said: "The early and evening meals of a day and a night." (Ahmad on the authority of Ali; And the author of Al-Firdaws on the authority of Abu Hurairah). According to another Hadith the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever begs the people and he has fifty (or forty according to another version) Dirhams or its like of gold has indeed begged them importunately (with no just cause)."

However, regardless of the difference of amounts, as long as the narrations are authentic, it should be believed that they were mentioned in reference to different states. That is because the truth is only one, in which estimation is impossible. All to do is to resort to approximation, depending upon an encompassing division of the states of the needy. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Mankind has no right but in three: food to sustain him, a garment to cover his private parts, and a house to shelter him; and what is beyond those would draw reckoning upon him." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Uthman Ibn Affan). Let us make those three the foundations of needs from which we could know their kinds, and then move to consider those kinds, and their amounts in relation to the different times and states.

As for their kinds, they are those three. Attached to them are their likes such as the charge of hiring a vehicle for the traveler if he could not walk on foot; and the same applies to the similar tasks and missions. This also includes his dependents and all things under his guardianship.

As for the amounts, the clothes, for example, should be fitting for him, as a man of religion, who wears it, i.e. it should consist of a single garment, a shirt underneath it, a handkerchief, a trousers, an underwear, and a pair of sandals. That is the necessary, and the second of any kind is always dispensable, whether in clothes or in anything else. It is on this that you should measure all things like the furniture, and their like. Furthermore, one should not seek the finest among the clothes, the most expensive among the furniture, and so on if the cheaper

could fulfill the purpose, provided that he should not be extremely far from the usage of his people.

As for food, it should be as much as a Mudd per day, as decreed by the religious law, of any kind of sustenance, even parley. The availability of condiment perpetually is surplus, whereas deprivation of it entirely is detrimental. It is required but sometimes, in which there is concession.

As for the residence, the minimum is that which is sufficient to give shelter, without adornment. To beg for adornment and enlargement is to beg while you are self-sufficient.

As for time, there is no doubt that what one needs immediately of sustenance for a day and a night, residence and clothes, is necessary. But to beg for what he would need in the future, it is of three degrees: The first is what he needs in the coming day. The second is what he needs for forty or fifty days. The third is what he needs for a full year. Let us put it decisively that whoever has what suffices him and his dependents, if he has dependents, for a full year, his begging is unlawful. What he has is the highest degree of self-sufficiency. To this applies the estimation of fifty Dirhams in the statement of the Prophet "peace be upon him".

To be sure, five Dinars could suffice a single man for a full year if he is thrifty. But if he is to help and aid others with money, perhaps this sum would not be sufficient for him. He may be in need of that before the end of the year. In this case, if the opportunity of begging is available to him, his begging for it is unlawful, for he is self-sufficient immediately, and he might not live until the next day, and in this way, he begs for what he needs not. It suffices him the early and evening meals of a day and a night. To him applies the narration about that estimation (we have related earlier).

But if the opportunity of begging would escape him and he would find none to beg him later, then, it would be permissible for him to beg, for a year stay expectation is not considered a long hope; and were he to delay begging, he fears he would fail to aid whomever he used to aid. But if his fear of begging in the future is weak, and what he begs for is unnecessary, then, his begging would be unfavorable, and the degrees of unfavorableness differ according to the weakness of necessity, fear to skip begging, laxity of time, and so on: and all of this could not be adjusted and rather should be subject to the striving and estimation of the servant himself in what is between him and Allah Almighty, in which he should seek the advice of his heart and act upon it, if he is to follow the way to the hereafter.

The more one is strong in certainty, more confident of the coming of the sustenance from Allah in the future, and more satisfied with the immediate sustenance, the higher the degree he will have with Allah Almighty is. If Allah Almighty bestows upon you the sustenance of you and your dependents for a day and a night, and you also feel afraid of the future, it would be only due to your weak certainty and rather paying attention to the intimidation of Satan to you. Allah Almighty said: " It is only Satan that suggests to you the fear of his votaries: Be you not afraid of them, but fear Me, if you have Faith." (Al Imran 175)

﴿ إِنَّمَا ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾ ﴾

And: "Satan threatens you with poverty and bids you to commit immorality. Allah promises you His forgiveness and bounties. And Allah cares for all and He knows all things." (Al-Baqarah 268)

﴿ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱلْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٨﴾ ﴾

Begging is one of the immoralities that was made permissible only for him who is forced by necessity. The one who begs for a thing he needs along the year, but not immediately, is worse than him who has wealth in his possession which he inherited and saved for something to fulfill after a year. Although both are permissible, under the fatwa of the religious jurists, to beg, they do so because of their love for this world, long hope in it, and mistrust of the bounty of Allah Almighty. This is one of the greatest destructives. We ask Allah Almighty to help us with His bounty and favor.

CHAPTER NINE
EXPOSITION OF STATES OF BEGGARS

Bishr used to say: "The poor are of three kinds: A poor never begs and even if he is given, he never takes; and this would be with the angels in the highest place of Paradise. A poor never begs but if he is given, he takes; and this would be in the company of those close to Allah Almighty, in the Gardens of Paradise. A poor begs when he is in need; and this would be in the company of the sincere lovers of truth, from among the companions of the right hand."

There is consensus then on condemnation of begging, which, even with deprivation and poverty, degrades one's rank and position. Shaqiq Al-Balkhi said to Ibrahim Ibn Adham when he came to him from Khurasan: "How have you left the poor from among your companions?" he said: "I have left them in such a state as if they were given, they would be thankful, and if they were deprived, they would be patient." He thought that, by leaving begging, they deserve appreciation. Shaqiq said: "As such I have left the dogs of Balkh." Then, Ibrahim asked him: "How have you left the poor in your town O Abu Ishaq?" He said: "The poor in our town are in such a state as if they were deprived, they would give thanks; and if they were given, they would favor, with what they were given, the others over themselves." He kissed his head and said: "You have told the truth, O mister!"

The degrees of these of different states among people concerning contentment, patience, gratitude and begging are numerous; and the one who follows the way to the hereafter should be well-acquainted with them, and how they are divided and differ in rank, for should he not know them, he could not know how to upgrade from the lowest to the highest of them. However, man was created in the highest of moulds, and then abased (to be) the lowest of the low, and was required to upgrade to the highest of the high once again. Whoever is not able to distinguish the lowest from the highest would not be able to upgrade with certainty. But there is doubt about him who learns it and might not be able to upgrade.

Those of different states might come under a state in which begging increases them in degree. But those deeds depend upon the intentions. It is narrated that somebody saw Abu Ishaq An-Nuri stretching his hand and begging the people. The man felt it and regarded this behavior of him odious. He came to Al-Junaid and related the story to him thereupon he said: "Do not feel it or regard it odious in your sight, for An-Nuri did not beg the people but to give them. In other words, he begged them in order that they would be given reward for that in the hereafter, whereas he would not be harmed."

He seemed to have referred to the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "It is the hand of the one who is given that is the higher." They said in comment on that: "The hand of him who is given is higher for it is he for whom the giver receives reward; and it is the reward, and not the money that should be appreciated." Then, Al-Junaid said: "Bring the balance." He weighed one hundred Dirhams and then took a handful of money and threw it on the one hundred Dirhams and then said to me: "Bring that to him." I said to myself: "A thing is weighed in order to determine its amount. Then, how has he mixed with that an unknown quantity and he is a wise man?" I carried the parcel and went to An-Nuri and he asked for the balance and weighed only one hundred Dirhams and said to me: "Give him back that (one hundred Dirhams) and say to him: 'I do not accept anything from you." He took what was beyond the one hundred Dirhams. I indeed grew more astonished. I asked him and he said: "Al-Junaid is a wise man. He likes to take hold of the rope by both ends. He weighed the one hundred Dirhams for himself seeking thereby the reward of the hereafter, and then threw on it a handful of Dirhams of unknown amount for Allah Almighty. I took what he specified to Allah Almighty and gave him back what he assigned to himself." I took it and gave it back to Al-Junaid who went on weeping and said: "He took his money and left for us ours. It is Allah Almighty Whose aid is sought."

Consider then how their hearts and states were purified and their deeds done sincerely to Allah Almighty. Each one of them saw the heart of his companion without saying a word. That is because they used to contemplate the hearts of each other, and their mysteries used to engage in private talks with each other, as a result of eating only the lawful, getting their hearts disengage from the love for this world, and wholeheartedly devoting themselves to Allah Almighty.

Whoever disapproves of that without experiment is indeed ignorant, and whoever disapproves of it after a long experiment in which he did not experience what they experience, is indeed under the influence of a severe ailment. To be sure, the insightful is one of two men: one followed the path and experienced what they experienced; and this is endued with good taste and gnosis, and has reached the certainty of sight. The other did not follow the path, or at least followed it but did not reach the same degree they had reached. But at the same time, he believed in and gave trust to it. Thus, he has the certainty of mind, but he has not attained the certainty of sight. The certainty of mind ranks second to the certainty of sight.

Whoever does not have the certainty of mind does not belong to the

community of the faithful believers, and on the Day of Judgement, he would be mustered in the company of the arrogant disbelieving ungrateful, killed by the weak hearts, and devotees of Satan.

We ask Allah Almighty to make us of those firmly grounded in knowledge, who say: "We believe in the Book; the whole of it is from our Lord."(Al Imran 7)

﴿ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ رَبِّنَا ﴾

Part two: asceticism

It has the following chapters:
Exposition of the real nature of asceticism
Exposition of the superiority of asceticism
Exposition of asceticism in detail in food, clothes, residence, furniture, and all living affairs
Exposition of the sign of asceticism

CHAPTER ONE
EXPOSITION OF THE REAL NATURE OF ASCETICISM

It should be known to you that abstinence from this world is one of the noble stations attained by the followers of the path (to the hereafter), and it consists, like all stations, of knowledge, state and deed. That is because all categories of faith, as put by the righteous predecessors, go back to intention, word and deed. Since the word is apparent, it is held in the place of the state, for with it the internal state seems evident. The word then is not intended for itself. If the word is not produced from an internal state, it is called Islam, and not faith. Knowledge then in relation to the state stands for the producer of fruit, whereas the deed for the fruit itself. So, let's mention the state with each of both its ends, i.e. the knowledge and the deed.

The state is the asceticism, i.e. to turn away from a particular thing and rather incline to another which is better. Whoever turns away from a certain thing, whether by way of selling, compensation, or anything else, has indeed done so because he has no desire for it, and whoever inclines to a particular thing, has indeed done so because he has desire for it. His state in relation to the thing from which he turned away is called asceticism, and in relation to the thing to which he inclined called desire and love. The state of asceticism then summons two things: A turned away from, and a desired for, and the latter is better than the former.

In order for the asceticism to be valid, it is requisite for the turned away from to be desired for in some point, for whoever turns away from a thing which is not wanted in itself is not called ascetic. To be sure, the one who leaves stones, dust, and the like of them is not called ascetic. The ascetic is he who leaves Dinars and Dirhams, i.e. money, for stones and dust are not desired for in themselves.

It is also requisite for the desired for to be better in his sight than the turned away from, in order for his desire to dominate. The seller does not sell a thing but

because buying in his sight is better than selling. In this way, his state in relation to the sold thing is called abstinence in it, and in relation to the compensation a desire and love for it. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty about the Prophet Yusuf "peace be upon him": " The (Brethren) sold him for a miserable price, for a few Dirhams counted out: In such low estimation did they hold him!" (Yusuf 20)

﴿ وَشَرَوْهُ بِثَمَنٍ بَخْسٍ دَرَاهِمَ مَعْدُودَةٍ وَكَانُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الزَّاهِدِينَ ﴾

Here, He Almighty described Yusuf's brothers as abstinent from him in covet of getting the favor of their father given to them alone, which was dearer, in their sight, than Yusuf himself, whom they sold in covet of compensation.

Whoever then sells the world for the hereafter is indeed abstinent from the world; and whoever sells the hereafter for the world is abstinent but from the hereafter. But the term asceticism is usually given to him who abstains in the world (and not the hereafter), in the same way as the term atheism is given to him who inclines to falsehood. Since asceticism is to turn away from a thing which is loved in general, it is unimaginable but to leave it for a thing dearer than it. But to leave a dear thing for nothing is questionable. Whoever turns away from all things, even Paradise itself, and loves none but Allah Almighty, is the absolute ascetic. Whoever turns away from all things in this world, but does not abstain from the good fortunes of the hereafter, but rather desires for its palaces, houris, gardens, rivers and fruits, is also ascetic, but lesser in rank than the former.

But even, whoever leaves some and not all the worldly fortunes, like him who leaves property but not majesty, or leaves enlargement in food and not beautification in adornment, does not deserve the term ascetic at all, and his position, among the ascetics, is like him who repents from some and not all the sins of this world. His asceticism in fact is valid, just as the repentance from some sins is also valid. To repent is to leave the forbidden things, whereas to abstain is to leave the permissible things. It may be that one has the power to leave some and not all the forbidden things, and the same applies to leaving the permissible things. But whoever leaves only the forbidden things is not called ascetic, although he abstains and turns away from the forbidden. This term, therefore, is usually given to him who leaves the permissible things.

asceticism then is to turn away from the world to the hereafter, or from all things to Allah Almighty, and this is the highest degree of asceticism. As well as it is requisite for the desired for to be good in one's sight, it is also requisite for the turned away from to be available. To leave what is not available is questionable, for the disappearance of the desire is confirmed by leaving an available thing. For this reason, it was said to Ibn Al-Mubarak: "O abstinent man!" on that he said: "No, the real ascetic is Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz, because although the world with its pleasures and delights was brought to him in willing submission, he left it entirely. But as for me, from which thing have I abstained?"

As for the knowledge which produces this state, it is to know that what is left is despicable in comparison with what is taken, like the merchant's knowledge

that the compensation is better than the sold thing, thereupon he desires for it. In the absence of such knowledge, it is unimaginable that he would lose his desire for the sold thing. Similarly, the same is true of him who knows that what is with Allah Almighty is abiding, and the hereafter is better and more enduring, just as the diamond is better and more enduring than ice, for example, and it is not difficult on the owner of ice to sell it for diamond.

This is the similitude of the world in comparison with the hereafter. The world is like the ice which is placed under the sun ray, and continues to dissolve until it vanishes entirely, in comparison with the hereafter which looks like the diamond that is inexhaustible. The more one's certainty and knowledge of the great difference between the world and the hereafter is strong, the more he becomes desirous for selling the former for the latter, to the extent that when one becomes strong in certainty, he sells his own soul and property as confirmed by Allah Almighty: " Allah has purchased of the Believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise)." (At-Tawbah 111)

﴿ ۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشۡتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمۡ وَأَمۡوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلۡجَنَّةَۚ (١١١) ﴾

Then, He showed how profitable their deal is saying: " Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded: That is the achievement supreme." (At-Tawbah 111)

This amount of knowledge in asceticism is sufficient, i.e. that the hereafter is better and more abiding than the world. This might be known to him who has no power to leave the world, because his knowledge and certainty are weak, or he is possessed by the desire and appetite immediately, and seized by Satan, or deceived by Satan's false promises in procrastination day after day, until he is snatched away by death, and nothing remains with him except grief and regret after skipping the opportunity. To the baseness of this world Allah Almighty refers in His statement: " Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world: the Hereafter is the best for those who do right." (An-Nisa 77)

﴿ قُلۡ مَتَٰعُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا قَلِيلٞ وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةُ خَيۡرٞ لِّمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ (٧٧) ﴾

And to the preciousness of the hereafter He refers in His statement: " But those who had been granted (true) knowledge said: "Alas for you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is best for those who believe and work righteousness." (Al-Qasas 80)

﴿ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ خَيۡرٞ لِّمَنۡ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا (٨٠) ﴾

He brought to the attention that the knowledge of the preciousness of the diamond causes one to turn away from its compensation.

Since asceticism is unimaginable but with opposition and turning away from what is dear to what is dearer, a man said in his supplication: "O Allah! Show to me the world just as You see it." On that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "Do not say so. But rather say: 'Show me the world just as You have shown it to the righteous among Your servants." That is because Allah Almighty sees it despicable just

as it really is. Every creature is despicable in comparison with His Glory. The servant sees it despicable in his sight in comparison with what is better for him. It is unimaginable, for example, that the horse seller sees his horse, even though he turns away from it, just as he sees the larva of the earth, for he is not in need of the larva, unlike the horse. Allah Almighty is self-sufficient with Himself and not in need of anything else. Thus, all things are the same in comparison with His Glory, and different in comparison with anything else. It is the ascetic who sees it different in comparison with himself and not with anyone else.

As for the deed that results from the state of asceticism, it is to leave a thing by way of selling or dealing or exchanging it for what is better. As well as the deed that results from the contract of selling is to leave the sold thing and rather take the compensation, the asceticism requires to leave the abstained thing entirely, i.e. the world with its pleasures and delights (for the hereafter). The ascetic thus extracts his love for it out of the heart and rather gets into it the love for the acts of worship, and extracts from the eye, hand and foot, and all parts of the body what he has extracted out of the heart, and uses them in implementation of the acts of worship, otherwise, he will become like the seller who delivered the sold thing and did not take the price. If he meets, the conditions required in taking and leaving, let him rejoice in the bargain which he has concluded. That is because the One who took part with him in that bargain should inevitably fulfill his pledge.

But, on the other hand, whoever sticks to that world, his asceticism is invalid, in principle. For this reason, Allah Almighty did not describe the brothers of Yusuf "peace be upon him" as abstinent from Benjamin when they said about him: "Truly Joseph and his brother are loved more by our father than we: but we are a goodly body!" (Yusuf 8)

﴿ إِذْ قَالُوا لَيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِينَا مِنَّا وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

And intended to get rid of him like Yusuf, but some of them interceded for him. He Almighty also did not describe them as abstinent from Yusuf "peace be upon him" when they intended to get rid of him. But they were described as such when they intended to sell him. This means that the sign of desire is to stick to the thing, and the sign of asceticism is to abandon it.

If you leave some and not all pleasures of this world, you have become abstinent only in what you have left, i.e. a partially and not absolutely abstinent. If you have no property, and are not helped by this world, no asceticism could be imaginable from you. That is because what is not available is not imagined to be left. Perhaps Satan allures to you with his deception, and gives you the false impression that as long as the world with its pleasures and delights has not been brought to you, you then are abstinent from it. So, you should not hang down by the rope of his deception without confirmation. If you do not experiment the state in which a particular thing is available, you would not be sure of your power to leave it when it is really available.

How many a person who thought he disliked sins when it was difficult upon him to commit them. But when their means became available to him, and there

was no fear from the people, he fell in them. If this is how the soul is deceived concerning the forbidden things, do not be confident of it concerning the permissible things, but you should experiment it from time to time in the state of availability. If it fulfills its promise of leaving regularly, in the absence of engagements and legal excuses outwardly and inwardly, then, there is no harm to be confident of it to some extent, provided that you should, at the same time, be cautious of its change.

Once, Ibn Abu Laila said to Ibn Shubrumah: "Do you not see this Abu Hanifah? We do not give a fatwa about something but that he refutes it with one better than it." He replied to him: "You should know that the world has come to him with its pleasures and delights, and he ran away from it, unlike us, for it has escaped from us and we ran in its pursuit." Similarly, all the Muslims during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "We love our Lord, and if we know in which thing lies His love, we should do it immediately." On that He Almighty revealed: " If We had ordered them to sacrifice their lives or to leave their homes, very few of them would have done it: but if they had done what they were (actually) told, it would have been best for them, and would have gone farthest to strengthen their (faith)." (An-Nisa 66)

﴿ وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنِ اقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ أَوِ اخْرُجُوا مِن دِيَارِكُم مَّا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيتًا (٦٦) ﴾

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to me: "You are among those (few)." He resumed: I did not know that from among us there was such as loved this world until Allah Almighty revealed: " Among you are some that hanker after this world and some that desire the Hereafter." (Al Imran 152)

﴿ مِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ (١٥٢) ﴾

It should be known to you that asceticism is not to abandon wealth in the sense that you spend it by way of generosity, attracting hearts, or covet. This is one of the good habits, but far from the acts of worship. But asceticism is to abandon this world entirely, because you know well its despicability in comparison with the preciousness of the hereafter. That is because the real ascetic is he, to whom the world has been brought in willing submission effortlessly and with no suffering, and he has the power to enjoy of it, not on the exclusion of reducing his majesty or putting himself to humiliation; but even he leaves it for fear he would get affable with it, and thus he becomes affable with something other than Allah Almighty, loves anything other than Allah Almighty, and joins anything in love with Allah Almighty; or leaves it in covet of the reward of Allah Almighty in the hereafter: he leaves the enjoyment of the worldly drinks in desire for enjoyment of the drinks of the Garden, enjoyment of the women and girls in desire for enjoyment of the houris in the Garden, the worldly adornment in desire for the adornment of the Garden, and the delicious kinds of food in desire for the pleasant fruits of the Garden, or lest it might be said to him: "You received your good things in the life of the world, and you took your pleasure out of them." (Al-Ahqaf 20)

﴿ أَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَٰتِكُمْ فِى حَيَاتِكُمُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهَا ﴾

Thus, he gives preference to what is promised over what was made easy for him in this world effortlessly and with no suffering, for his knowledge that what is in the hereafter is better and more abiding, and anything else is but worldly dealings which have no benefit in the hereafter.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPOSITION OF SUPERIORITY OF ASCETICISM

Allah Almighty said: "So he went forth among his people in the (pride of his worldly) glitter. Said those whose aim is the Life of this World: "Oh! that we had the like of what Qarun has got! For he is truly a lord of mighty good fortune!" But those who had been granted (true) knowledge said: "Alas for you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is best for those who believe and work righteousness: but this none shall attain, save those who steadfastly persevere (in good)."" (Al-Qasas 79-80)

﴿ فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ فِى زِينَتِهِۦ ۖ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا يَٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ قَٰرُونُ إِنَّهُۥ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ۝ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا وَلَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ ۝ ﴾

Here, He Almighty attributed asceticism to the religious scholars and those endued with knowledge.

He further said in the same Surah: " Twice will they be given their reward, for that they have persevered." (Al-Qasas 54)

﴿ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا۟ ۝ ﴾

In comment on it, it was said that it refers to the abstinence from this world.

He also said: "That which is on earth We have made but as a glittering show for the earth, in order that We may test them, as to which of them are best in conduct." (Al-Kahf 7)

﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۝ ﴾

In interpretation of it, it is said that He means which of them is the most abstinent from it. He Almighty described abstinence in it as one of the best deeds.

He Almighty said: " To any that desires the tilth of the Hereafter, We give increase in his tilth; and to any that desires the tilth of this world, We grant somewhat thereof, but he has no share or lot in the Hereafter." (Ash-Shura 20)

﴿ مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُۥ فِى حَرْثِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِن نَّصِيبٍ ۝ ﴾

He also said: " Nor strain your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to parties of them, the splendour of the life of this world, through which We test them: but the provision of your Lord is better and more enduring." (Ta Ha 131)

﴿ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴾

He Almighty said too: "Those who love the life of this world more than the Hereafter." (Ibrahim 3)

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَحِبُّونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا عَلَى ٱلْآخِرَةِ ﴾

He described here the disbelievers, which means that the faithful believers stand on the opposite extreme, i.e. they love the hereafter more than the world.

As for the Prophetic narrations about condemnation of this world and abstinence in it, they are numerous; and we have related some of them in the Book of Condemnation of the World in the quarter of the destructives. To be sure, the love for this world is among the destructives, whereas aversion for it is among the saviors. So, let us limit ourselves to the superiority of aversion for this world, and it is intended by asceticism.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, upon whom morning has come while his main concern is with the (material benefits of the) world, Allah will disperse his concerns, make his poverty in front of him, and he will receive nothing from the world more than what has been decreed for him; and he, upon whom morning has come while his main concern is with the hereafter, Allah will make one his main concern, remove poverty from him, place satisfaction (and feeling of self-sufficiency) in his heart, and further the (pleasures and delights of this) world will come to him in willing submission." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Zaid Ibn Thabit).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "If you see a servant endued with silence and abstinence from this world, you then should approach him for he gives wisdom." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Khallad).

Allah Almighty said: "He grants wisdom to whom He pleases; and he to whom wisdom is granted receives indeed a benefit overflowing." (Al-Baqarah 269)

﴿ يُؤْتِى ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِىَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴾

For this reason, it is said that "If one abstains in this world for forty days, Allah makes the springs of wisdom flow in his heart, and run on his tongue."

It is narrated on the authority of one of the companions that he said: We said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! Who among the people is the best (in conduct)?" he said: "Every faithful believer endowed with clean heart and truthful tongue." We asked: "O Messenger of Allah! What is meant by the clean heart?" he "peace be upon him" said: "The pious, clean righteous, which entertains neither rancor nor cunning, neither transgression nor envy." We further asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Who is next to him (in good)?" he said: "He, who hates the world and loves the hereafter." (Ibn Majah and Al-Khara'iti on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr). The point here is that the worst of people is he who loves this world on the exclusion of the hereafter.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If you like that Allah Almighty should love you, then, abstain from this world." (Ibn

Majah on the authority of Sahl Ibn Sa'd). he "peace be upon him" thus made the abstinence from this world a cause of gaining the love of Allah Almighty. Whomever Allah loves is in the highest degree. So, abstinence from this world should occupy the best and highest stations. It also implies that whoever loves this world incurs the aversion of Allah for him.

It is narrated in a Hadith on the authority of one from the family of the Prophet that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Both asceticism and abstention make a nightly tour on the hearts: if they meet a heart full of faith and modesty, they would reside in it, otherwise, they would leave it."

When Harithah "Allah be pleased with him" said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "I am really a believer" He asked him: "Then, what is the reality of your faith?" He said: "I have abstained from this world, to the extent that its gold and stone have become the same in my sight; and it seems to me as if I do not see but Paradise and Hell, and the Throne of my Lord prominent before my eyes." On that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "You have known the truth. So, abide by it, O servant whose heart Allah has illuminated with faith." (Al-Bazzar on the authority of Anas; and At-Tabarani on the authority of Al-Harith Ibn Malik). Consider how he began to show the reality of his belief by abstinence from this world, and joined it with the certainty of faith, and how the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" claimed purity to him when he said about him: "A servant whose heart Allah has illuminated with faith."

When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about the meaning of opening the breast in the statement of Allah Almighty: " Those whom Allah (in His plan) wills to guide, He opens their breast to Islam" (Al-An'am 125)

﴿ فَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَهْدِيَهُۥ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ ﴾

He "peace be upon him" said: "When the light (of faith) enters into the heart, the breast immediately opens to it, and goes on expansion." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah! Is there any sign characteristic of that?" he "peace be upon him" said: "Yes. (Its sign is) to desert from the abode of deception (i.e. this world), to incline to the abode of eternity (i.e. the hereafter), and get ready for death before its descent." (Al-Hakim). Consider here how he made asceticism a prerequisite for Islam, i.e. to desert from the abode of deception.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Feel shy of Allah Almighty as it is fitting for His Majesty." They said: "We really feel shy of Him Almighty." He "peace be upon him" said: "It is not so. But you build what you do not live in, and gather what you do not consume." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Umm Al-Walid Bint Umar Ibn Al-Khattab). He showed clearly that this conduct contradicts shyness from Allah Almighty.

When a particular delegation came upon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", they said to him: "We are really believers." He asked them: "Then, what is the sign of your faith?" They made a mention of patience at the time of adversity, gratitude at the time of prosperity, satisfaction

with the fate (be it good or evil), and abstention from gloating at the misfortunes of their enemies. On that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If you are really so, then, (in order to complete your faith) collect not what you do not consume, build not what you do not live in, and compete not over that which you would inevitably leave." (Al-Khatib and Ibn Asakir on the authority of Jabir). In this way, he made asceticism a completion of their faith.

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" addressed us with a good sermon in which he said: "Whoever comes (on the Day of Judgement) with (the testification that) 'There is no god to be worshipped but Allah', mixing nothing with it, Paradise would be assured to him." Ali "Allah be pleased with him" stood towards him and said: "Let my father and mother sacrifice their lives for you O Messenger of Allah! What is that which should not be mixed with it? Describe and explain it to us." He "peace be upon him" said: "It is the love for this world in pursuit of it, and following its pleasures, (as shown from) a people who say the saying of the Prophets and do the doing of the tyrants. Whoever comes (on the Day of Judgement) with 'There is no god to be worshipped but Allah' having nothing of that, Paradise would be assured to him." (At-Tirmidhi in his Nawadir on the authority of Zaid Ibn Arqam).

According to a particular narration: "Munificence results from certainty (of faith), and no certain would enter the fire (of Hell); and niggardliness results from suspicion, and no suspicious would enter Paradise." (This is reported by Sahib Al-Firdaws on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda').

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The munificent is close to Allah, close to the people, and close to Paradise; and the niggard is far from Allah, far from the people, and close to the fire (of Hell)." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah). To be sure, the niggardliness is the fruit of the desire for this world, whereas munificence is the fruit of asceticism; and what is appreciated is the producer of the fruit.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Al-Musayyab from Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that he said: "Whoever abstains from this world, Allah Almighty places wisdom into his heart, and runs it on his tongue, and lets him know the disease and medicine of this world, and takes him out of it safe to the abode of peace." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Safwan Ibn Sulaim).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was in his companions when he came upon milch ten-month pregnant she-camels, and they were the dearest of their property to them, and the most expensive in their sight, for they combined the back (as riding mounts), meat, milk and wool, and for their high position in their hearts, Allah Almighty made a mention of them in His statement: " When the she-camels, ten months with young, are left untended" (At-Takwir 4)

﴿ وَإِذَا ٱلْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" turned away from them, and reduced his vision from looking at them. It was said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! Those are the most expensive of our property: why do you not catch a glimpse of them?" He "peace be upon him" said: "Allah Almighty has forbidden me to do so." Then, he recited: " Nor strain your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to parties of them, the splendour of the life of this world, through which We test them: but the provision of your Lord is better and more enduring." (Ta Ha 131)

﴿ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿١٣١﴾ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Masruq from A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: I said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! Do you not ask your Lord for sustenance so that he would bestow sustenance on you?" I went on weeping out of pity for his severe hunger. He "peace be upon him" said: "O A'ishah! By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, were I to ask my Lord to turn the mountains of this world into gold and become with me, surely, He would do wherever I like. But I have preferred the worldly hunger over satiation, its poverty over richness and its grief over joy. O A'ishah! This world is not fitting for Muhammad"Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"nor for the family of Muhammad"Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". O A'ishah! Allah Almighty did not approve for these of determination among Messengers but to keep patient on the adversities of this world, and endure (abstinence) from its dear things; and He did not approve but to obligate me with the same He had obligated them with, saying: " Therefore patiently persevere, as did (all) Messengers of determination." (Al-Ahqaf 35)

﴿ فَٱصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعَزْمِ مِنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾

By Allah, I have no way but to obey Him. By Allah, I would keep patient as they did, as much as is within my capacity; and there is no power but with Allah Almighty." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of A'ishah).

It is narrated from Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" that when the countries of the different parts of the world were opened (with their good things) to him, his daughter Hafsah "Allah be pleased with her" said to him: "Put on the lenient clothes in order to meet the delegations with whenever they come to you from the different parts; and order the cookers to make pleasant food in order to eat and feed those who come to visit you." On that, Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "O Hafsah! Do you not know that one's wife knows best from among all the people his affairs?" She answered in the affirmative. He said: "I beseech you by Allah to tell me: Do you know that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" never put on during his Prophethood such and such (lenient clothes), and that he and his family never ate their fill in the morning but that they were hungry in the same evening, nor ate their fill in the evening but that they were hungry in the coming morning? I beseech you by Allah to tell me: Do you know that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" never put on during his Prophethood such and such (lenient clothes), and that neither he nor his family

ate their fill from the dates until Allah Almighty helped him conquer Khaibar? I beseech you by Allah to tell me: Do you know that one day the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was served with food on a table high a bit, thereupon he felt it until the colour of his face changed (out of anger), and ordered that the table be lifted, and the food be placed on something lower or even on the ground? I beseech you by Allah to tell me: do you know that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did not sleep on a folded garment and one night it was made into four folds for him and he slept on it, and when he got up he said: "You have hindered me from standing at night (for supererogatory prayers) because of (my comfortable sleep on) this four-folded garment. Make it two folds as you used to do"? I beseech you by Allah to tell me: Do you know that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" happened to wash his garment, and when Bilal came to inform him of the time of prayer, he did not find a garment to put on to come out to the prayer and waited until his garment dried, in order to put on and come out to prayer? I beseech you by Allah to tell me: Do you know that a women from the tribe of Banu Zufar made a pair of garments to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and sent to him one of them before the other, thereupon he came out to the prayer while wrapping himself in it, and, having nothing else over his body, tying its ends to his neck, and then offered prayer in such a state?" Umar "Allah be pleased with him" continued to remind her of such things until he caused her to weep and he himself wept, so much that we thought his soul would leave him (and he would die).

According to another version, the following addition is mentioned in which Umar "Allah be pleased with him" resumed: "I had two companions (the Prophet and Abu Bakr), and they followed a certain path. Were I to follow a path different from theirs, my destiny would be different from theirs. By Allah, I would patiently persevere on their austere living perchance I would attain with them their abundant living (in the hereafter)."

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "It was the habit of the Prophets before me that one of them would be tried with poverty so extremely that he had no more than a single garment to put on, and one of them would be troubled by lice so much that lice would kill him; but even, such things were dearer to them than the gift to you." It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "When Moses "peace be upon him" reached the (spring of) water of Madyan, the greenness of herbs was visible from his abdomen out of his severe starvation." This was what the Prophets and Messengers of Allah "peace be upon them" chose for themselves, given that they knew best, from among all the people, Allah Almighty, and the right way of attainment in the hereafter.

It is narrated on the authority of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: When Allah Almighty revealed the following statement: " And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allah: announce

unto them a most grievous penalty. On the Day when heat will be produced out of that (wealth) in the fire of Hell, and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, "This is the (treasure) which you buried for yourselves: taste you, then, the (treasures) you buried!" (At-Tawbah 34-35)

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ (٣٤) يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ (٣٥) ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Perished be the world! Perished be the Dinar and Dirham!" we said: "O Messenger of Allah! Allah Almighty forbade us to hoard gold and silver. Then, which kind of money should we save?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Let anyone of you take (instead) a celebrating tongue (that remembers Allah more often), a thankful heart (to show gratitude to Allah), or a good righteous wife to help him fulfill the requirements of his hereafter." (Ibn Majah).

It is narrated on the authority of Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him" from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that he said: "Whoever gives preference to the world over the hereafter, Allah afflicts him with three things: an anxiety that never leaves his heart, a destitution with which he never gets self-sufficient, and a greed with which he never gets satisfied." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "No servant of you will have his faith complete until he becomes in such a state in which to be anonymous is dearer to him than to be recognized, and to have little dearer to him than to have much." (the author of Al-Firdaws on the authority of Ali Ibn Talhah).

The Christ "peace be upon him" said: "The world is but a bridge (to the hereafter): so, cross it and do not inhabit it." It was said to him: "O Prophet of Allah! Would that you order us to build a house to worship Allah in it." He said: "Go and build a house on the water." They said to him: "How should a building stand straight on the water?" he said: "Then, how should the worship of Allah stand straight with the love for this world?"

Our Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Allah Almighty offered to me to turn the large valley of Mecca into gold for my sake, and I rejected and said: 'No, O Lord! But let me become hungry one day and satiated one day. On the day I am hungry, I would supplicate and implore to You; and on the day I am satiated, I would praise You and give thanks to You."

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: One day, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out walking and Gabriel "peace be upon him" was with him. He ascended the Safa (mountain). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to Gabriel: "O Gabriel! By Him, Who has sent me with the truth, the evening has come upon the family of Muhammad "Allah's blessing

and peace be upon him"and they have even neither a handful of Sawiq nor a mouthful of baking powder." No sooner had he said so than he heard a loud thud coming from the sky that scared him, thereupon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" asked Gabriel: "Has Allah Almighty commanded that the day of Judgement be established?" he said: "No, but this is Israfil "peace be upon him" and he has descended to you when he heard your speech." Israfil came to him and said: "Allah Almighty has heard your speech and sent me to you with the keys of the earth and ordered me to offer to you, if you so liked, to turn the mountains of Tihamah into aquamarine, pearl, gold and silver for your sake; and if you like, you would be a king Prophet, and if you like, a servant Prophet." Gabriel "peace be upon him" hinted to him to humble himself before Allah Almighty, thereupon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said thrice: "No, I choose to be a servant Prophet."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If Allah Almighty intends good for a servant, He causes him to abstain from this world, desire for the hereafter, and let him know the defects of his own self." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami in his Firdaws).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to a man: "Abstain from this world so that Allah would love you, and abstain from what is in the hands of the people, so that the people would love you."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "If one likes that Allah Almighty should give him knowledge without learning and guidance without instruction, let him abstain from this world."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever has longing for Paradise hastens to do good; and whoever fears of the fire (of Hell) entertains himself from desires and appetites; and whoever expects death leaves pleasures; and whoever abstains from this world regards slightly all calamities." (Ibn Hibban on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talib).

It is narrated that our Prophet and the Christ also "peace be upon them" said: "Four things are not attained without toiling: silence, which is the first commencement of worship, humbleness, celebration (of Allah) more often, and (the love for having) little (instead of much) of things." (At-Tabarani and Al-Hakim on the authority of Anas).

However, it is impossible to bring all narrations and Prophetic Hadiths about appreciation of the aversion for this world and condemnation of love for it. All the Prophets and Messengers "peace be upon them" were sent only to instruct the people and divert them from the world to the hereafter. Most of their speech with the people goes back to this fact. What we have brought is sufficient, and it is the aid of Allah that should be sought.

As for the traditions, a mention may be made of the following:

"(The testification that) 'There is no god to be worship but Allah' still averts harm from the people as long as they do not ask to be given what they are short of in this world (or according to another version, as long as they do not give preference to the deal of their world over their religion): Once they do so, and, at

the same time, say: 'There is no god to be worshipped but Allah', Allah Almighty says to them: "You have told a lie, for you are not true to it.'"

One of the companions "may Allah be pleased with them" said: "We have pursued all deeds, and did not see, more suitable to the hereafter, better than the abstinence from this world." One of the companions said to a group of the first generation of the Tabi'is: "You do more deeds and strive more than the companions of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" although they were better than you." It was said: "What is the reason for that?" He said: "Because they were more abstinent than you in this world."

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "To abstain from this world is to comfort your heart and body." Bilal Ibn Sa'd said: "It is sufficient for sin that Allah Almighty encourages us to abstain from this world, and we reject but to have longing for it." A man said to Sufyan: "I like to meet an abstinent scholar." He said to him: "Woe to you! That is something too impossible to exist." Wahb Ibn Munabbih said: "Paradise has eight gates: When the inhabitants of Paradise come to it the gate keepers start saying: "By the Honor of our Lord, none shall enter it before these who were abstinent from this world, and had longing for Paradise."

Yusuf Ibn Asbat said: "I like that my Lord give me three things: When I die, I have not even a single Dirham in my possession, no debt upon me, and no flesh on my bone." He was given them all. It is narrated that one of the caliphs sent gifts to the jurists and they accepted them. He sent ten thousand Dirhams to Al-Fudail and he did not accept it. His sons blamed him saying: "All the religious jurists have accepted their gifts, then, do you reject yours given such state of destitution as in which you are?" He wept and said to them: "Do you know my and your similitude? It is like a people who had a cow which they used in tilting, until when it grew old, they slaughtered it to get benefit from its flesh and hide. As such, you like to slay me in this late age of mine. It is better to me to die out of hunger, O my family, than to slay Al-Fudail."

Ubaid Ibn Umair said: "The Christ, son of Mary "peace be upon him" used to put on hair and eat of the trees, and he had neither a child to die (out of hunger), nor a family to collapse, nor did he save anything for his coming days. But he would sleep wherever he was once evening came upon him."

It is related that the wife of Abu Hazim said to him: "Winter has come upon us, and we are in need of food, clothes and fire wood." He replied: "Well, all of this is necessary. But at the same time, we also should die, be resurrected, and then stand in front of Allah Almighty, in order to go at last either to Paradise or to the fire (of Hell)."

Al-Hassan was asked: "Why do you not wash your garment?" He said: "The matter (of the hereafter) is more hasty (to come) than that." According to Ibrahim Ibn Adham: "Our hearts have been veiled with three covers, and the certainty (of faith) would not be disclosed to the servant unless those are removed: to rejoice of what is present, to grieve for what is lost, and to exult of praise. If you rejoice of what is in existence, then you would be greedy; and if you grieve for what is lost, then, you would be displeased, and to be sure, the

displeased would be punished; and if you exult of praise you would be conceited, and conceit always makes deed fruitless."

According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "A two-rak'ah prayer to be offered by an abstinent from this world is much better for him and dearer to Allah Almighty than the worship of the striving worshippers who worship Allah perpetually to the end of time."

According to one of the righteous predecessors: "The favor of Allah upon us in what He has taken from us is greater than His favor in what He has given us." He seems to have paid attention to the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Indeed, Allah Almighty protects His believing servant from this world for He loves him in the same way as you protect the sick among you from (the harmful) food and drink, out of fear for him." Having understood this, it should be learnt that the favor of prevention which leads to health is greater than the favor of giving that leads to harm.

According to Ath-Thawri: "The world is an abode of crookedness and not an abode of straightness; an abode of grief and not an abode of joy. Whoever knows it well never rejoices of prosperity nor grieve for adversity."

According to Sahl: "The deed would not be done by a worshipper with perfect sincerity until he is free from four things: hunger, nakedness, destitution and humiliation."

According to Al-Hassan Al-Basri: "I have caught a people, and accompanied various groups of persons, and they never rejoiced of anything they received in this world, nor grieved for anything they lost in it. The world was in their sight more trivial than the dust. One of them lived fifty or sixty years, during which he never changed his garment nor set up a cooking vessel, nor placed a thing between his body and the ground (when he slept), nor ordered his family to prepare fine food for him. When it was night, they would stand on their feet (to perform the supererogatory prayers), with their tears flowing on their cheeks. They supplicated their Lord privately to release them (from the fire). Whenever they did a good deed, they would go on giving thanks to Allah Almighty, and ask Him to accept it from them; and whenever they committed an evil deed, they would grieve and ask Allah Almighty to forgive it for them. They remained as such (until they died). By Allah, they were not free from sins, nor saved but by virtue of the forgiveness of Allah Almighty. May Allah bestow mercy upon them, and be pleased with them."

CHAPTER THREE

EXPOSITION OF DEGREES AND DIVISIONS OF ASCETICISM IN RELATION TO ITSELF, THE THING ABSTAINED FROM, AND THE THING DESIRED FOR

It should be known to you that asceticism is divided into three degrees according to its strength.

The first is the lowest, according to which one abstains from this world, although he has longing for it, his heart inclines to it, and his soul turns to it. But

at the same time, he strives, as much as he could, to refrain from it. This man is called the abstinent-seeming. That is the first step towards asceticism. The difference between him and the real ascetic is that he strives his utmost to force himself to abandon the world, whereas the latter devotes himself wholeheartedly to do the acts of worship in obedience of Allah Almighty. But the abstinent-seeming is at risk of being overpowered by his soul, and attracted by his desire to return to the world once again, and get comforted with it in more or less.

The second degree applies to him who leaves this world willingly for he regards it with slightness in comparison with what he covets for (in the hereafter). He is like him who leaves a single Dirham in covet of two. Although the matter might not seem difficult on him, he needs to wait a little. But this ascetic sees his asceticism and cares about it, like the seller who sees what he sells and is fond of it. In this way, he is about to be proud of himself and of his asceticism, thinking that he has left something significant for another more significant. This, therefore, is a kind of deficiency.

The third degree is the highest, according to which one abstains (from this world), and further abstains from his asceticism, and sees not his asceticism, for he does not think that he has left anything of significance. That goes back to his belief that the world is nothing at all. His example is like him who leaves a piece of pottery and takes a piece of diamond instead. This is not seen by him as compensation. However, the world with all it contains in comparison with the eternal bliss of the hereafter that is with Allah Almighty is less than a piece of pottery in comparison with a piece of diamond. That is, to be sure, the perfection in asceticism, caused by the perfect knowledge. Such ascetic is safe from the risk of caring about the world, just as the one who leaves the piece of pottery for the piece of diamond is safe from the danger of cancelling the deal once again.

Abu Yazid said to Abu Musa: Abd-Ar-Rahim: "In which subject do you speak?" he said: "In asceticism." He further asked: " asceticism from which thing?" he said: "From this world." He shook off his hands and said: "I thought he speaks in anything of significance; and the world is of no significance: from which thing do he abstain in it?"

The example of him who leaves this world for the hereafter, in the sight of those of gnosis and masters of hearts filled with contemplations and revelations, is like one who liked to enter the palace of the king, and was prevented by a dog standing at the gate, thereupon he threw to it a morsel of food to engage it and he thus was able to enter the palace, and attain the closeness to the king until he achieved his commands concerning the entire kingdom. Do you see that this man thinks the king is under obligation to him just because of a morsel of food he threw to the dog in return for what he received? However, Satan is a dog standing at the gate of Allah Almighty, preventing the people from entering, given that the gate is opened and the veil is lifted.

The world is but a morsel of food: if you eat it you would take pleasure in it just at the time of chewing, and this pleasure vanishes once it is swallowed up. It

is only its waste matter that remains in the stomach, and in the end, it becomes putrefied filth, which should be extracted. Being so, if one leaves it in order to receive the honor of the king, then, how should he care about it once again? The entire world, in case all things is free from evil and harm in it, compared with the eternal bliss of the hereafter, is less than the morsel of food compared with the kingdom of this world. By no means could the limited be compared with the infinite. The world, no matter how long it would last, is limited, given that the lifetime of any person who lives the longest in it is very short, and its pleasures are not pure and life in it is not free from evils, whereas the hereafter is never-ending. Which comparison then could be made between the world and the hereafter, which has the eternal bliss?

The ascetic then does not care about his asceticism unless he cares about what he abstains from, and he does not care about what he abstains from unless he sees it something of importance, and he does not see it something of importance unless he is short of gnosis.

Those are the different degrees of asceticism, and each of them has various levels. The ascetics are different in their patience and endurance by the difference of suffering and difficulty; and these who admire their asceticism differ by their difference in caring about their asceticism, and so on.

Asceticism also in relation with the desired for is divided into three degrees: the lowest, according to which the desired for is only salvation from the fire and from all pains and torments, like the grave punishment, calling to account, the risk of the bridge that is over the Hell, and all terrors one is going to encounter (in the hereafter), according to the different narrations about them. It is narrated, for example, that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "The man would be made to stand for accounting (in abundant sweat) so that if a hundred thirsty camels come upon him, they would quench their thirst out of his sweat." (Ahmad on the authority of Ibn Abbas). That is the asceticism of the fearful who would accept to die and become nonexistent, for salvation from pain and suffering ends by death.

The second degree is to abstain from this world out of desire for the reward of Allah Almighty and His great bliss, and the promised pleasures in the Gardens of Eden, as regards the houris, palaces, etc. that is the asceticism of the hopeful, who do not leave the world out of satisfaction with nonexistence, and salvation from pain and suffering, but they do in covet of permanent existence and eternal never-ending bliss.

The third degree is the highest, and it applies to those who abstain with no desire but for Allah and for meeting with Him. One's heart does not care about pain in order to seek salvation from it, nor does it think about the pleasures and delights in order to attain and achieve them. On the contrary: he is wholeheartedly devoted to Allah Almighty. It is he that upon whom morning comes while all his concerns turn into only one. He is the real monotheist who seeks none but Allah Almighty, for whoever seeks anything other than Allah Almighty has indeed worshipped it, and every sought is worshipped, and every seeker a servant of it. Indeed, to seek anything other than Allah Almighty is a part of the hidden polytheism.

That is the asceticism of the lovers and Gnostics, for none loves Allah Almighty but he who knows Him well. As well as he who knows both the Dinar and Dirham and is well-aware of the impossibility of combining them together, loves the Dinar only, similarly, he who knows well Allah Almighty, and the pleasure of looking at His Holy Countenance, and is well-aware of the impossibility of combining that pleasure and the pleasure of enjoying the beautiful houris and graceful palaces in the Garden, loves and gives preference to the pleasure of looking at the Countenance of Allah Almighty. Think not that when the inhabitants of the Garden attain the pleasure of looking at the Holy Countenance of Allah Almighty, their hearts would extend to the pleasure of houris and palaces.

As for its division as regards the abstained from, there are as many as more than one hundred sayings and statements about that. So, we would not engage in transmitting those different statements. But let us refer to these of them that comprehend the details most, for indeed most of those statements are short of encompassing the whole matter.

Let us say that the abstained from has many general principles and detailed issues, some of which explain its divisions. As for the first general principle, it includes all things other than Allah Almighty: all things other than Allah should be abstained from even in themselves. The second general principle is to abstain from all enjoyments, and this includes the desire, anger, arrogance, authority, majesty, property, etc. the third general principle is to abstain from the property and majesty and all their means and causes, to which all fortunes of the soul, go back. The fourth general principle is to abstain from knowledge, power, Dinar and Dirham. By knowledge and power, I mean that which is intended to possess hearts.

The details, which might be more explanatory, might probably, make the things from which one is to abstain beyond calculation. Seven of them are mentioned by Allah Almighty in one Holy Verse in which He says: " Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet: women and sons; heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence); and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life; but in nearness to Allah is the best of the goals (to return to)." (Al Imran 14)

﴿ زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْبَنِينَ وَٱلْقَنَٰطِيرِ ٱلْمُقَنطَرَةِ مِنَ ٱلذَّهَبِ وَٱلْفِضَّةِ
وَٱلْخَيْلِ ٱلْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ وَٱلْحَرْثِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلْمَـَٔابِ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

They are reduced to five in another Holy Verse in which He Almighty says: "Know you (all), that the life of this world is but play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting and multiplying, (in rivalry) among yourselves, riches and children." (Al-Hadid 20)

﴿ ٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِى ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

Those are reduced once again to two in another place where Allah says: "The life of this world is but play and amusement." (Muhammad 36)

﴿ إِنَّمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ ﴾

However, all are reduced to one in His statement: "And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower Desires, Their Abode will be the Garden." (An-Nazi'at 40-41)

﴿ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾

The asceticism then is to turn from all fortunes of the self, and once a man turns from the fortunes of the self, he turns from abidance in this world, and further shortens his hope in it. What causes him to like to abide is to enjoy of this world, and of course, one seeks the eternal abidance and enjoyment. But if one turns away from it, he surely does not like it. For this reason, "When (at length) the order for fighting was issued to them, behold! a section of them feared men as - or even more than -, they should have feared Allah; they said: "Our Lord! why have You ordered us to fight? Would You not grant us respite to our (natural) term, near (enough)?" Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world: the Hereafter is the best for those who do right; never will you be dealt with unjustly in the very least!" (An-Nisa 77)

﴿ لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا ٱلْقِتَالَ لَوْلَآ أَخَّرْتَنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ ۗ قُلْ مَتَٰعُ ٱلدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧٧﴾ ﴾

At that time, the ascetics appeared distinct from the hypocrites.

As for the ascetics and lovers of Allah Almighty, they fought in the Cause of Allah in one row, as if they were a solid cemented structure, in expectation of either of both good things; and whenever they were invited to fighting, they would smell the smell of Paradise, and hasten to it just like a thirsty hastens to the cold water, out of eagerness to support the religion of Allah or attain the rank of martyrdom. Whoever among them died on his bed grieved for his loss of such rank of martyrdom. Khalid Ibn Al-Walid "Allah be pleased with him" said while breathing his last: "How many times I regarded with slightness my soul and attacked the rows of enemies in covet of martyrdom, and now, I am dying on my bed like the old women." When he died, about eight hundred injuries were counted on his body. As such was the state of these who were true to their faith "Allah be pleased with them".

But the hypocrites fled away from the battlefield for fear of death, thereupon it was said to them: "The Death from which you flee will truly overtake you: then will you be sent back to the Knower of things secret and open: and He will tell you (the truth of) the things that you did!" (Al-Jumu'ah 8)

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْمَوْتَ ٱلَّذِى تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ مُلَٰقِيكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

By giving reference to abidance over martyrdom, they have exchanged better for worse: " These are they who have bartered guidance for error: but their traffic is profitless, and they have lost true direction." (Al-Baqarah 16)

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَٰرَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُهْتَدِينَ ﴾

As for the sincere in faith, Allah Almighty bought from them their own souls on condition that they would have Paradise in return. When they knew that they had left, say, twenty or thirty years of enjoyment (in this world for eternal enjoyment), they rejoiced of the bargain they have concluded.

Being so, you would learn that the definitions given by the righteous to asceticism do not comprehend it entirely in so much as they refer only to some of its parts. Each one talked about asceticism from his own point of view, and in consideration to those whom he addressed:

Bishr, for example, said: "Abstinence from this world is to refrain from the people." That is a reference to abstinence in majesty in particular. According to Qasim Al-Jaw'i: "Abstinence from this world is to refrain from (eating and filling) your inside. The more you have control over your belly, the more you become abstinent." That is a reference to abstinence in one desire, which, by my life, prevails over, if not provokes almost all the other desires. According to Al-Fudail: "Abstinence from this world lies in satisfaction." That is a reference to property in particular. According to Ath-Thawri: "Abstinence from this world is to shorten the hope." It indeed comprehends all desires. Whoever wishes to abide have a long hope (in this world), and whoever shortens his hope seems as if he has turned away from all desires.

According to Uwais: "If the ascetic comes out seeking (property), asceticism leaves him." This means that he made reliance (on Allah Almighty) one of the conditions of asceticism. According to him once again: " asceticism is not to seek what is guaranteed." By saying so, he refers to sustenance. According to the traditionalists and scholars of Hadith: "To love this world is to act upon the opinion and mind, and to abstain in it is to follow the knowledge and abide by sunnah." If this is intended to refer to the corrupt opinion and mind with which the majesty in this world is pursued, it would be valid. But it indeed refers to some unnecessary desires. To be sure, some sciences are pointless for the hereafter, and one of them is so long that man might spend his whole lifetime in engagement in it. The condition of the valid ascetic is that any unnecessary thing should be the first to turn away from.

According to Al-Hassan: "The real ascetic is him who would say, if he sees anyone: 'This is better than me.'" He means that asceticism lies in humbleness, in reference to the denial of majesty and conceit; and those are but parts of asceticism. Another one said: " asceticism is to pursue the lawful." But where is this from him who says that " asceticism is not to seek (property)" as Uwais put it? Undoubtedly, he intended by it not to pursue even the unlawful. According to Yusuf Ibn Asbat: "Whoever perseveres harm, leaves the desires and eats bread (sustenance) from unlawful (earnings) has indeed acted upon asceticism in principle."

There are other statements about asceticism, and all of them, as we have seen, include only some and not all parts and aspects of it. They are not defective in themselves, since they might express the current state of the sayer, or of the people whom he addresses. However, the most

comprehensive statement about asceticism, regardless of being brief, is that of Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani in which he said: "WE have heard many statements about asceticism. However, asceticism, in our sight, is to leave everything that engages you from Allah Almighty." He said the same in more detail: "Whoever gets married or sets out on journey in pursuit of living or even Hadith has indeed relied on this world." He made all things in this world in opposition to asceticism. Abu Sulaiman recited the following statement of Allah Almighty: "But only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart."

Then he commented on it saying: "It is the heart that has nothing other than Allah Almighty." He further said: "They abstain from this world for they have disengaged their hearts from all concerns of this world and rather devoted themselves wholeheartedly to the hereafter."

As for the division of asceticism on the basis of its rulings, it is divided into obligatory, supererogatory and safe, as Ibrahim Ibn Adham put it. The obligatory asceticism is to abstain from the unlawful. The supererogatory asceticism is to abstain from the lawful. The safe is to abstain from the suspicious things. We have mentioned the details of abstention in our talk about the degrees of abstention in the Book of the Lawful and Unlawful. Abstention is a part of asceticism. It was said to Malik Ibn Anas: "What is asceticism?" he said: " asceticism is the piety."

As for the traces left by asceticism on the soul, they are endless. That is because the passing thoughts, states and movements of which the soul enjoys are infinite and never-ending. The same applies to the apparent states in which the degrees of asceticism are endless. The utmost of asceticism in this respect is that of Jesus "peace be upon him" when he took a stone as a cushion on which he put his head during his sleep. Satan said to him: "Have you not left this world entirely? Then, what has seemed alluring to you from it?" he asked him: "What is that which seemed alluring to me from it?" He said: "You have taken the stone as a cushion." He meant that he blessed himself in elevating his head a bit from the ground. On that he threw the stone and said to him: "Take it along with what I have left for you."

It is narrated from John, son of Zechariah "peace be upon them" that he kept wearing the coarse and rough cloth until it holed his skin in order to leave enjoyment of lenient clothes and comforting the sense of touching. His mother asked him to replace it with a woolen cloak, and he did accordingly. Allah Almighty revealed to him: "O John! You have given preference to this world over Me!" on that he wept and removed the wool cloak, and returned to his first state.

The degrees of asceticism then outwardly and inwardly are endless and beyond calculation. The least degree of it is to abstain from all suspicious and forbidden things. But some people said: "The real asceticism is to abstain from the lawful, but to abstain from the suspicious and forbidden things does not belong to asceticism at all." But later on, they saw that nothing lawful has remained in the wealth and property of this world, and thus no asceticism could be imaginable now.

You may argue: "It is true that the real asceticism is to leave all things and not to engage in anything other than Allah Almighty. But how could this be imagined with eating, drinking, clothing, mixing with the people, and talking to them, in which one engages in things other than Allah Almighty?"

In reply to that, it should be known to you that to turn away from all things in this world and come to Allah Almighty is to wholeheartedly devote oneself to Him in thought and celebration, and this could hardly be imagined without abidance, and one could not abide without the necessities of living. Thus, if you restrict yourself in this world only to what maintains your body from destruction, and your purpose is to seek the aid of your body in your acts of worship, you would not be considered to engage in things other than Allah Almighty. The one who is providing the she-camel with fodder and watering it on the way to Hajj does not engage from Hajj in anything else. But your body should be on the way to Allah Almighty like the she-camel on the way to Hajj. Your purpose should not be to have your riding mount enjoy of pleasures and delights, but only to maintain it from the means and causes of destruction until it conveys you to your destination. Similarly, you should maintain your body from destructive hunger and thirst by eating and drinking, from the destructive cold and heat by clothes and residence. You should, in so doing, restrict yourself only to the necessities, and not aim at enjoyment of pleasures, but rather stick to piety in obedience of Allah Almighty. This, indeed, is not opposite, but rather requisite to asceticism.

But you may say: "But even, I should inevitably take pleasure in food while eating." In reply to that, it should be known to you that no harm befalls you in that, as long as your purpose is not the pleasure in itself. The one who drinks cold water might take pleasure in it, simply because it has quenched his thirsty. Similarly, whoever urinates or defecates is relieved by answering the call of nature. But at the same time, this relief is not intended in itself. The one who stands at night (for supererogatory prayers) might get comforted with the breezes of dawn and the sound of birds. But as long as this is not intended in itself, it does not harm him. From among the fearful, there was such as sought a place where he could not receive the breezes of dawn for fear he would get comforted with it, and his heart become familiar with it, which means the intimacy with this world on the account of the intimacy with Allah Almighty. For similar reasons, Dawud At-Ta'i had a basin of water exposed to the heat of sun, and he used to drink the hot water saying: "Whoever senses the pleasure of the cold water finds it difficult on himself to leave this world."

Such are the concerns of the cautious and careful among the righteous. To be sure, precaution in all of this is more decisive, regardless of being difficult, since this difficulty, no matter how severe it might be, is short-lived, and not heavy on those who know well the opposition of the world to the religion.

CHAPTER FOUR

EXPOSITION OF PREFERENCE OF ASCETICISM IN LIFE NECESSITIES

It should be known to you that the things in which the people engage are divided into essential and superfluous. The superfluous is like the horses branded (for blood and excellence) and the like of them. Most people keep them as an

aspect of luxury and comfort through riding them, given that they are able to walk on foot. What is essential is like eating and drinking, and all that is necessary for life. Anyway, to enumerate all kinds of the superfluous is impossible for they are beyond calculation. But this is possible concerning the essential and necessary. Since the necessary itself might turn into superfluous, in some cases, as regards the amount, kind and time, it is then important to explicate the way of abstinence in it. Let's say that six things comprise the necessities and essentials: food, drink, clothes, furniture, marriage, and property; and majesty for many purposes, including those six. We have previously mentioned majesty, and why people love it and how they could avoid it in the book of Showing Off in the quarter of destructives. Now, we are going to explain those six essentials.

First necessity: food. Man should have lawful food to sustain himself. But at the same time, it should not go beyond a certain extent in terms of length and breadth in order for man to be able to observe abstinence in it. As for length, it is limited by the duration of one's lifetime. To be sure, whoever has only the food of his day is not satisfied with it. The breadth of food pertains to its amount, kind and time of having it. The length could not be shortened unless one's hope becomes short. The minimum extent of it which gives the highest degree of asceticism is only to avert hunger from oneself once it is severe and there is fear of disease because of it. Such one does not save from his early meal for his evening meal. That is the highest degree of asceticism. The second degree is to save as much as is sufficient for a month or forty days. The third degree is to save as much as is sufficient for a whole year. That is the rank of the weak among ascetics. Whoever saves more than that is not called ascetic, for whoever has a hope to stay more than a year is of very long hope. He would nod be considered ascetic unless he has no earnings, and does not accept to take from the people, like Dawud At-Ta'i who inherited twenty Dinars which he kept and spent along twenty years. This does not contradict asceticism in principle except in the sight of him who makes reliance a necessary condition for it.

As for its breadth in relation to the amount, half a pound is the minimum per day, a complete pound the middle, and a single Mudd the highest, and it is that which Allah Almighty decreed to feed the indigent and needy as expiation. But what is above that is out of asceticism. Whoever could not satisfy himself with a single Mudd at maximum per day has no share in the asceticism of the stomach for he engages himself in food.

As for its breadth in relation to kind, the least amount is that which sustains the body, even bread made of dregs; and the middle amount is the parley and corn bread; and the highest is the bread made of unsifted wheat. But if it is sifted, then, one would enter the area of luxury, and leave that of asceticism. As for condiment, the minimum is salt or herb and vinegar, the middle is oil or any kind of similar fat, and the highest is meat of any kind, once or twice a week, and more than that turns one from the area of asceticism.

As for its breadth in relation to time, the minimum is only once per night and day in case he is fasting. The middle is to observe fast and drink only and do not eat one night, and eat and do not drink on the coming night and so on. The

highest is to remain hungry at least three days up to week, and more. We have previously mentioned the way to reduce food, and curb its appetite in the quarter of destructives. Let such one reflect the state of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and the companions "Allah be pleased with them", as to how they abstained from most kinds of food and dispensed with condiment.

It is narrated on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: "It happened that as long as forty days came upon us without a lamp or a fire (for cooking) to be kindled in our house." She was asked: "Then, with which sustenance had you sustained yourselves?" she said: "With both brown things, dates and water." (Ibn Majah). Consider how they abstained from meat, soup and even any kind of condiment.

Al-Hassan said: "the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to ride the donkey, wear wool, put on sandals which might be sewed, lick his fingers (after finishing from food), and eat on the ground. On that he used to say: "I am only a servant (of Allah), and I eat as the servants eat, and sit as servants sit."

The Christ "peace be upon him" said: "Let me tell you the truth: whoever seeks Paradise should eat more often from the parley bread and sleep near dunghills besides dogs." Al-Fudail said: "the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" has never eaten his fill from the wheat bread for three consecutive days since he arrived in Medina." The Christ "peace be upon him" used to say: "O children of Israel! I advise you to stick to water, wild herbs and parley bread; and beware of the wheat bread for you would not be able to give due thanks for it."

We have previously mentioned the biography of the Prophets and Messengers "peace be upon them" and the righteous predecessors and their abstinence in food and drink. So, there is no need to repeat it once again here.

when the inhabitants of Quba' brought to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" who came to visit them a drink of milk mixed with honey, he placed the utensil and said: "I indeed do not forbid it; but I rather leave it out of humbleness before Allah Almighty."

Once, a drink of milk mixed with honey was brought to Umar "Allah be pleased with him" and it was a very hot day, thereupon he said: "Provided that you should take away the reckoning for it from me." Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: "The truthful ascetic is he, whose sustenance is just what he finds, dress what screens his body, and residence wherever he is. The world is his prison, the grave his lying place, the space his sitting place, meditation his thought, the Qur'an his talk, the Lord his companion, the celebration his friend, asceticism his acquaintance, grief his state, modesty his motto, hungry his condiment, wisdom his speech, earth his bed, piety his provision, silence his booty, patience his support, reliance his sufficiency, mind his guide, worship his profession, and Paradise his destination Allah willing."

Second necessity: Clothes. The minimum thereof is just what averts cold and heat and screens the private parts, or in other words, a covering to cover his

body therewith. The middle thereof consists of a shirt, a hat and a pair of sandals. The highest is to have handkerchiefs and trousers besides. What is more than that goes beyond the limit of asceticism. It is requisite for a real ascetic to have no other garment at the time his garment is being washed. But rather he should abide in the house at that time. If he possesses a pair of shirts, a pair of handkerchiefs and a pair of trousers, he would not become an ascetic in terms of amount.

As regards the kind, the minimum is the rough cloth, the middle the coarse wool, and the highest the heavy cotton.

Concerning the time, the maximum is what screens for a whole year, and the minimum is to remain only for a day, to the extent that one of them patched up his garment with the tree leaves although dryness would damage it soon. The middle is that which endures for a month or so. But to seek for what is more than a year is to go beyond the limit of asceticism, for it is out of the long hope. Whoever has more than that should give it in charity, otherwise, he would not become an ascetic, but rather a lover of this world. Let one consider the states of the Prophets and Messengers "peace be upon them" and the companions "Allah be pleased with them" in this respect, and how they abandoned the lenient and expensive clothes.

Abu Burdah said: A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" brought out to us a matted clothing and a heavy loin garment and said: "the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died while he was putting on those two garments." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty loves him who puts on the cheap of clothes and does not care about its kind."

Amr Ibn Al-Aswad Al-Ansi said: "I never put on the expensive clothes for which I am recognized (among the people), nor do I sleep at night on a covering, nor do I ride on a comfortable mount, nor do I fill my belly with food." On that Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Whoever is pleased to see the guidance of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" let him look at Amr Ibn Al-Aswad." (Ahmad).

In another narration the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No servant puts on an expensive garment for which he likes to gain fame, but that Allah Almighty turns away from him until he takes it off, no matter how dear he is in His sight." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Dharr).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" bought a garment for four Dirhams, and both his upper and lower garments were no more than ten Dirhams, and four and a half cubits in length. He "peace be upon him" bought trousers for three Dirhams. He "peace be upon him" used to put on two white woolen garments called a suite for they were of the same kind. Sometimes he put on two Yemenite heavy Burdahs.

Once, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" put on a two hundred-Dirham silk garment only for one day, and his companions went on touching it and saying with exclamation: "O Messenger of Allah! Has it

been sent down upon you from the Garden?" indeed, he was a gift from Al-Muqawqis, the chief of Egyptian Copts, and he liked to honor it by wearing it. Then, he "peace be upon him" took it off and sent it as a gift to a man from the polytheists. Afterwards, he forbade putting on silk and heavy brocade. He seemed to have put it on at first in order to confirm the prohibition, the same as he did with the gold ring, which he wore one day and then took it off and forbade men to wear gold rings.

He "peace be upon him" did the same with Barirah when he said to A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her": "Buy her and put the condition of allegiance on her family." Then, he came up the pulpit and forbade that the slave's allegiance should continue to be to the owners after they sell him. (both sheikhs on the authority of Wahb).

He "peace be upon him" also made permissible the Mut'ah marriage for three days after which he prohibited it by way of confirming the sanctity of marriage. (Muslim on the authority of Salamah Ibn Al-Akwa').

One day, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" prayed in a square garment with marks, and when he finished and concluded the prayer with Taslim, he said: "I have been engaged in this (square garment of marks). Take it and give it to Abu Jahm and bring me his coarse mantle instead." he thus favored the coarse mantle to his soft square garment.

On another occasion, the strap of his sandal was torn thereupon he replaced it with a new one, in which he offered prayer. But when he ended it with Taslim he said: "Take away that new strap, and bring me back the torn one, for it drew my attention during the prayer." Once, he "peace be upon him" put on a gold ring and caught a glimpse of it while he was on the pulpit, thereupon he threw it away and said: "This (gold ring) has diverted my attention from you: I took a glance of it and a glance of you."

One day he "peace be upon him" put on a new pair of sandals, whose smartness appealed him, thereupon he fell in prostration and said: "Their smartness has appealed me thereupon I humbled myself before my Lord lest He would be displeased with me." Then, he came out with them and gave them to the first indigent person he met.

It is narrated on the authority of Sinan Ibn Sa'd "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: A cloak of fine wool was woven for the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" with a black fringe. When he put it on he said: "Look how smart it is! How soft it is!" a Bedouin stood up and said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! Grant it to me." However, whenever the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked for anything, he would never withhold it. He "peace be upon him" gave it to him and commanded that another one be woven for him, and he "peace be upon him" died before it was finished. (Abu Dawud and At-Tabarani on the authority of Sahl Ibn Sa'd).

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: One day, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" entered upon Fatimah "Allah be pleased with her" while she was grinding with the millstone, and she was having a clothing of camel hair. When he caught a

glimpse of her he wept and said: "O Fatimah! Taste the bitterness of this world for the bliss of the hereafter." On that occasion Allah Almighty revealed to him: " And soon will your Guardian-Lord give you (that wherewith) you shall be well-pleased." (Ad-Duha 5)

﴿ وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰٓ ﴾

(Abu Bakr Ibn Lala).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The best of my people, as I was told by the highest company (in the heaven), are those who laugh publicly because of the extensive mercy of Allah Almighty, and weep in secret out of fear of His punishment. Their burden is light on the people and heavy on themselves. They wear the old torn pieces of clothing and follow the holy men (of religion). Their bodies are on earth and their hearts are near the Throne (of Authority)." (both Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi).

That was the biography of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in the clothes, and he recommended all of his people to follow him saying: "Whoever loves me should act upon my sunnah." He "peace be upon him" further said: "I advise you to stick to my sunnah and the way of the rightly-guided caliphs (my successors) after me: abide by it strictly." (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Al-Irbad Ibn Sariyah). In confirmation of that Allah Almighty said: " Say: "If you do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."" (Al Imran 31)

﴿ قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" advised A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" saying: "If you like to join me, then, avoid sitting with the rich and wealth among the people, and do not abandon a garment until you patch it (and it becomes useless because of patches)." (At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim).

The shirt of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" had as many as twelve patches, with some of which of leather. Once, Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" bought a garment for three Dirhams and put it on while he was the caliph, and cut its sleeves from the wrists and said: "Praise be to Allah Who has dressed me in that good dress."

According to Ath-Thawri and others: "Put on of clothes what makes you neither famous in the sight of the learned, nor contemptible in the sight of the ignorant." He said: "Whenever a poor came upon me during my prayer, I would let him pass, and whenever anyone of the world seekers having an expensive suite came upon me, I would be displeased with him, and not let him pass." One of the learned said: "I evaluated the garment and pair of sandals of Sufyan for a Dirham and four Daniqs."

Ibn Shubrumah said: "The best of my clothes is that which serves me; and the evil of my clothes is that to which I am a servant." One of the wise said: "Put on of clothes what helps you mix with the laymen, and do not put on of them what makes you famous for it and causes the people to look at you because of it." Abu

Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: "Clothes are of three kinds: a dress for Allah Almighty, and it is that which screens the private parts; a dress for oneself, whose softness is required; and a dress for the people, whose essence and smartness are required." According to another one: "He whose dress becomes soft, his religion turns weak accordingly."

The dress of anyone of the majority of religious scholars from among the Tabi'is was as cheap as 20-30 Dirhams. The dress of Al-Khawas, for instance was of two pieces: a shirt and a lower garment underneath it, and perhaps he put the tail of his shirt over his head. It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever leaves a dress of beauty and smartness, just out of humbleness to Allah and seeking His Countenance, although he has the power to have it, it becomes incumbent upon Allah Almighty to save for him from the most beautiful women of Paradise in tents of pearl."

Allah Almighty revealed the following to one of His Prophets: "Tell My devotees not to dress themselves in the dresses of My enemies, nor enter the gateways of My enemies, lest they would become of My enemies." Rafi' Ibn Khadij "Allah be pleased with him" looked at Bishr Ibn Marwan while he was teaching religion in the mosque of Kufah, thereupon he said to the people: "Consider how your commander teaches you religion and he has over his body the dress of the dissolute." Indeed, he had very soft clothes. On another occasion, Abdullah Ibn Amir Ibn Rabie'ah came to Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" and he had an expensive suite, and he started talking about asceticism, thereupon Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" put his palm on his mouth and gave no care to Abdullah, who grew angry. He made a complaint against him to Umar "Allah be pleased with him" who said: "It is you that have done so with yourself. You talked about asceticism in front of him while having this expensive suite."

Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Allah Almighty took the pledge from the imams of guidance to be in the state of the lowest among the people in order for the rich to imitate them, and the poor not to be contemptible for his poverty. When he "Allah be pleased with him" was blamed for his rough and coarse clothes he said: "It is closer to humbleness, and more convenient to cause the Muslim to follow it." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" forbade luxury and said: "Allah Almighty has servants who do not lead a luxurious life."

Fadalah Ibn Ubaid who was the governor of Egypt was seen disheveled and barefooted thereupon it was said to him: "Do you behave like this although you are the governor?" On that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" commanded us to be barefooted sometimes." (This is reported by Abu Dawud). Ali Ibn Abu Talib said to Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with them": "If you like to join your two companions (The Prophet and Abu Bakr), then, raise the shirt, lower the loin cloth, sew your sandals, and do not eat your fill." Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Be austere in your life, and do not imitate the non-Arabs in their uniform, those of Caesar and Khosrau." Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Whoever gets dressed in the dress of a people belongs to them."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Among the worst of my people are some who are fed with all kinds of pleasure: they seek the delicious kinds of food and expensive clothes, and speak ostentatiously." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The lower garment of a faithful believer should reach half his legs, and there is no harm on him in what is below it down to the ankles, and what is below that would be in the fire (of Hell); and on the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty would never look at him who used to drag his garment (on the ground) out of arrogance." (Malik, Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri and Abu Hurairah).

Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani told that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "None among my people puts on hair (clothes) except for a hypocrite or a foolish." According to Al-Awza'i: "Putting on wool is out of sunnah on journey, and a religious innovation in residence." Once Muhammad Ibn Wasi' entered upon Qutaibah Ibn Muslim, and the former had a cloak of wool. Qutaibah asked him: "What has forced you to put on that woolen clothing?" He kept silent, thereupon Qutaibah said once again: "Do I talk to you and you do not answer me?" He replied: "Indeed, I dislike to say that I have done so by way of asceticism, thereby claiming purity to myself, or out of poverty, thereby making a complaint against my Lord."

Abu Sulaiman said: "When Allah Almighty took Abraham "peace be upon him" as a bosom friend, it was revealed to him to screen his private parts from the earth. He used to take a single one from everything except that he had a pair of trousers so that whenever one was being washed, he would put on the other in order for his private parts to be always screened." It was said to Salman Al-Farisi "Allah be pleased with him": "Why do you not put on the fine of clothes?" He said: "What could a servant do with the fine dress? If he is set free (from life by death), he would have, by Allah, a dress that is never torn out." It is narrated from Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz that he had a cloak and mantle of hair which he used to put on at night whenever he stood for prayer. Al-Hassan said to Farqad As-Sabakhi: "Do you think you are superior to the people by virtue of your mantle? I have been reported that most of those who put on mantles are hypocrites."

Third necessity: Residence. The abstinence in it also has three degrees: the highest is not to demand a particular place for oneself, but he is rather satisfied with a corner in any mosque, like the people of Suffah (the poor among emigrants). The middle is not to demand a particular place for himself, more than a shed or a hut of leaf stalks. The lowest is to demand a built chamber for himself by way of buying or hiring. If the residence is as large as to satisfy his need and no more, and has no decoration or adornment, this would not turn him out of the last degree of asceticism. In general, what is intended for necessity should by no means go beyond the limit of necessity. Thus, one should take from this world only what is necessary, i.e. to regard it no more than the equipment and means of religion, and what is beyond that opposes religion. The purpose of residence is to avert cold and rain, and to protect oneself from sights and harm.

It was said that the first aspect of the long hope after the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" appeared in embroidery of clothes and construction of buildings. During his lifetime, most people used to build with leaf stalks, and later on, they came to build with stones, gypsum and bricks. It is related in a particular narration: "A time will come upon the people in which they would embroider their dresses in the same way as the Yemenite Burdahs are embroidered." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" commanded his paternal uncle Al-Abbas "Allah be pleased with him" to destroy a dome he had built to make high his residence.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out one day and found a high dome, thereupon he asked: "What is this?" his companions told him: "It belongs to so and so, a man from amongst the Ansar." He remained silent, and kept it in himself, until when that very man came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and saluted him among the people, he turned back from him. He did the same many times, until the man came to know that he was angry with him, and that he had estrangement towards him. He complained of that to his companions and said: "By Allah, I disapprove of the conduct of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" towards me." They said: "He came out and saw your dome." He then went to his dome and put it down, and leveled it with the ground. One day, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out and did not see the dome. He asked: "What has happened to the dome?" they said: "Its owner complained to us your estrangement towards him, and we told him, thereupon he put it down." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, every building might be (a cause of) destruction to its builder unless it is inevitably necessary." (Abu Dawud).

According to Al-Hassan: "the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died and he did not even place a stone over a stone, nor a pipe over a pipe (i.e. he did not build anything." (Ibn Hibban, Abu Na'im and At-Tabarani). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If Allah intends evil for a servant, He causes him to consume his wealth in water and clay (i.e. in the bricks of building)." (Abu Dawud on the authority of A'ishah). It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came upon us and we were setting right a bower belonging to us, thereupon he asked: "What is that (which you are doing)?" we said: "It is a bower belonging to us, and it was about to collapse; and we are mending it." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I do not think but that the matter (of death) will be sooner than that." (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah).

Noah "peace be upon him" took a house of pipes and it was said to him: "Would that you build a house (from stones)!" On that he said: "This is very much for him who is going to die." Al-Hassan said: "We entered upon Safwan

Ibn Muhairiz "Allah be pleased with him" and he had a house of pipes which inclined on him. We said to him: "Would that you repair it!" He said: "How many a man died while this remained standing." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever built beyond what suffices him would be required to carry it on the Day of Judgement." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud). According to a certain narration: "One should receive reward for everything he spends on earth, except what he spends on water and clay (i.e. on building)." (This is reported by Ibn Majah on the authority of Khabbab Ibn Al-Aratt).

In comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: " That House of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not high-handedness or mischief on earth: and the End is (best) for the righteous" (Al-Qasas 83)

﴿ تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۚ وَٱلْعَـٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ ﴾

It is said that it refers to authority and competition in constructing high buildings. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Every building would be a means of evil on its builder on the Day of Judgement except for what is intended only to protect from heat and cold." (Abu Dawud on the authority of Anas). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to the man who complained to him of his narrow house: "It would be spacious in the heaven" i.e. in Paradise. (Abu Dawud and At-Tabarani on the authority of Khalid Ibn Al-Walid, and he is the man who made the complaint).

Once, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" saw on his way to Sham a building of bricks, stone and gypsum, thereupon he said: "I have never thought that from among this Muslim nation, there is such as builds like the building of Haman to Pharaoh." He meant the statement of Pharaoh to Haman: " O Haman! light me a (kiln to bake bricks) out of clay, and build me a lofty palace, that I may mount up to the god of Moses. (Al-Qasas 38)

﴿ وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَـٰهٍ غَيْرِى فَأَوْقِدْ لِى يَـٰهَـٰمَـٰنُ عَلَى ٱلطِّينِ فَٱجْعَل لِّى صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّىٓ أَطَّلِعُ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَـٰهِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾

It is said that Pharaoh was the first to use bricks and gypsum in building, which Haman made for him, and then they were followed by the tyrants. That is the adornment in this life.

Al-Hassan said: "Whenever I entered anyone of the dwelling places of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" I would touch the roof with my hand (for it was very short)." According to Amr Ibn Dinar: "If a servant makes his building as high as more than six cubits, an angel would call him: "Where are you going O most wicked of those who are wicked?"" Sufyan forbade people to look at the high constructed buildings and said: "Had it not been for the looking of people to such buildings, they would not have constructed them." Looking at such buildings then helps make them high and well-constructed. According to Al-Fudail: "I do not wonder at him who built and then left his building when he died. But I wonder at him who sees and does not

take consideration." According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "A people will come, and they will raise clay (in buildings), and degrade religion. They will pray to your Qiblah, and die not on your religion."

Fourth necessity: The house furniture. Abstinence in it also has three degrees: the highest is the state of Jesus "peace be upon him". He did not have but a comb and a mug (for water). Once, he saw a man combing his head with his fingers, thereupon he threw away the comb. On another occasion, he saw a man drinking from the river with his hand, thereupon he threw away the mug. That is the ruling of all furniture, i.e. it should be intended to fulfill the purpose, and no more, and what is beyond that, i.e. what is dispensable would be a source of evil on its owner in the world and hereafter. As for what is indispensable, one should restrict himself to the minimum, i.e. pottery in all that for which pottery is sufficient.

The middle is to have furniture, as much as only satisfies his need. But here, he uses the same item on a multi-purpose basis, like using the same bowl in eating, drinking, and saving things. The righteous predecessors liked to use the same element in many things for the purpose of lightening the burden.

The lowest is to have for each purpose a certain item, but not from the highest kind. But if those increase in number or in the quality, one would turn out of the class of the ascetics. Let such reflect the biography of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and the companions "Allah be pleased with them".

A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" said: "The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to lie on a cushion of leather stuffed with fibre palm leaf." (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah). According to Al-Fudail: "The bed of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was no more than a folded garment and a cushion of leather stuffed with fiber palm leafs." (At-Tirmidhi in Ash-Shama'il on the authority of Hafsah). It is further narrated that Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" entered upon The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and he was lying on a mat made of fibre palm leafs whose marks left their traces on his side, as there was nothing between him and the mat. Underneath his head there was a leather pillow stuffed with palm fibres, and leaves of a saut tree were piled at his feet, and above his head hung a few water skins. On seeing the marks of the mat imprinted on his side, I wept. He said: "Why are you weeping?" I replied: "O Allah's Apostle! Caesar and Khosrau are leading the life (i.e. Luxurious life) while you, The Messenger of Allah, though you are, is living in destitution." The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" then replied: "Won't you be satisfied that they enjoy this world and we the Hereafter?" He answered in the affirmative, thereupon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Then, it would be so." (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

A man entered the house of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" and started to turn his eyes inside it thereupon he said: "O Abu Dharr! I do not see any luggage or furniture in your house." On that he said: "We have a house to which we direct the benefits of our luggage." He said: "But you should have

luggage as long as you are living here." He said: "Then, the owner of the house would not let us in it." When Umair Ibn Sa'id came from Hims and entered upon Umar "Allah be pleased with them" the latter asked him: "What do you have from this world?" he said: "I have a stick to recline on and kill a serpent once I encounter it, a leather container to save my provision in, a bowl to eat in, and a pot to carry water in to drink and perform ablution for prayer; and what is beyond that from this world is dispensable." Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "You have told the truth, may Allah bestow mercy upon you."

It is further narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" returned from journey and came to visit Fatimah "Allah be pleased with her" but he found at the gate of her house a curtain and two heart-shaped bracelets of silver, thereupon he returned and did not enter upon her. Abu Rafi' "Allah be pleased with him" entered upon her and found her weeping. He asked her about the reason and she told him the story. Abu Rafi "Allah be pleased with him" asked him and he said to him: "I have returned for the sake of the curtain and the two silver bracelets." She "Allah be pleased with her" sent them with Bilal "Allah be pleased with him" to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" with the following message: "I have given them in charity. So, put them wherever you see it fitting." He said to Bilal: "Go and sell them and distribute the price among the people of Suffah." He sold the two heart-shaped bracelets for two Dirhams and a half and then gave them in charity. Then, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" entered upon her. He greeted her and said: "Let my father sacrifice his life for you! You have done well!" (This narration is collected from Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah on the authority of Safinah; and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Thawban).

Once, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saw a curtain hung at the gate of the chamber of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" thereupon he removed it and said: "The more I see it, the more I remember the world. Send it to the family of so and so." (At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i).

One day, A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" spread for him a new mattress, and the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to lie on a folded garment. He continued to turn on it during the night and when it was morning he said to her: "Return the old folded garment, and take away this new mattress from me, for it made me sleepless this night." (Ibn Hibban on the authority of A'ishah).

On another occasion, five or six Dinars were sent to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" at night, thereupon he kept them in the house until morning. But during the night he remained sleepless, and did not get comforted until he distributed them all towards the end of the night, after which he slept. A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" said: "At that time, he slept so deep that I heard his snoring. In the morning he said: "What should Muhammad think his Lord (would do with him) should he meet Allah with those Dinars still in his house?" (Ahmad on the authority of A'ishah and Umm Salamah with a slight variation of wording).

Al-Hassan said: "I have caught seventy good men, and none of them had

anything more than his garment, and none of them put anything between him and the ground; and whenever he slept, he would place his body direct on the ground, and cover himself with his garment."

Fifth necessity: Marriage. Many say that there is no significance of abstinence in marriage in principle, nor in getting married so much. This opinion was adopted by Sahl Ibn Abdullah who said: "Women were made lovable to the chief of ascetics (i.e. the Prophet), so, how should you abstain from them?" Ibn Uyainah concurred saying: "The most abstinent among the companions was Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him", although he had four wives and over ten slave-girls." The right is what Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: "Every thing that diverts you from Allah Almighty, be it a wife, a wealth, or a child, is a cause of bad omen upon you." One's woman might divert him from Allah Almighty.

The right is that sometimes spinsterhood might be better than marriage, as has previously been shown in the Book of Marriage; and in this way, to leave marriage becomes out of asceticism. But whereas marriage is better to avert the overwhelming sexual desire, then, it becomes obligatory. Then, how should leaving it become out of asceticism? It is true that there is no sin in marriage or spinsterhood, leaving marriage might be better if one knows that it would engage in women from the celebration of Allah Almighty. But if it is learnt that one's wife would not divert him from Allah Almighty, and at the same time, he leaves it in avoidance of the pleasure of looking at her beauty, having sexual relation with her, and so on, then, leaving marriage would not be asceticism. To be sure, children are intended for his lineage to continue, and proliferation of people from among the nation of Muhammad "peace be upon him" is one of the acts of worship. The pleasure that befalls one in what is necessary does not harm him, as long as it is not intended in itself.

It is like him who leaves food and drink in avoidance of the pleasure of eating and drinking: it is not asceticism for by so doing, he would lose his life entirely. Similarly, to leave marriage is to cut off his lineage. So, it is impermissible to leave marriage in abstinence from its pleasure, for another evil would ensue from that. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" got married.

Whoever finds himself in the same state of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in the sense that his heart would not engage in women and spending on them from the celebration of Allah Almighty, then, his abstinence in them would be of no significance. But this state is unimaginable to anyone other than the Prophets and devotees of Allah Almighty. Most people engage in their wives and women from anything else. If one fears more than one of them, or the beautiful among them would engage him, let him marry only one whose share of beauty is little. Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: "The abstinence in women is to prefer the unattractive and orphan to the beautiful and noble." According to Al-Junaid: "It is better for the novice beginner not to engage his heart in three things, otherwise, his state would change: earning, pursuing Hadith and getting married."

Sixth necessity: The wealth and majesty. They are means to achieve the

previous five. As for majesty, it is to have possession of and influence on hearts in order to be able to do things through others in case he is not able to do them by himself. Whoever is not able to do a certain thing, and is lacking anyone to serve him in it, he then is lacking majesty in the heart of his servant, for should he have no influence on him, he would not serve him. One needs to have influence on the hearts of others either to bring about benefit, avert harm, or get rid of injustice. The benefit might be brought about by money. One might serve another for charge, regardless of his influence on him. Influence is needed for him who serves for no charge.

As for averting harm or injustice, majesty is needed where there is no justice, or where he lives among wrongful neighbours whose evil he could not avert unless he has influence on them or majesty in the sight of the ruler. The extent to which this is needed could not be adjusted, given the fear and bad assumption of the consequences. But even, whoever goes on in pursuit of majesty is indeed in the way of destruction. It is not fitting for an ascetic to seek majesty in principle, for his engagement in religion and worship paves the way for him to have influence on the hearts which averts harm from him even if he lives among the disbelievers, let alone the Muslims. In sum, there is no concession, in principle, to seek majesty and influence on the hearts, and the little thereof inevitably leads to causing harm to others. So, let one avoid it entirely.

As for wealth, it is necessary for living, and I mean of course the little thereof. If the ascetic works to get his daily earnings, he should leave earning what is beyond that. One of them used to stop from working once he earned what is equal to two fruits or grains. That is the condition of asceticism. If one goes beyond that to what suffices him for a year and above, he would turn out from the class of the ascetics, their weak and strong, i.e. would be deprived of the promised reward in the hereafter, even though the term of ascetic does not leave him. But if he has an estate from which he withholds the income of a year, due to his weak certainty of reliance on Allah, there would be no harm, provided that he should give in charity what is beyond that. But in this way, he becomes a weak abstinent, for the perfect reliance on Allah is requisite for asceticism to be valid.

To be sure, the burden of a single in all of that is lighter than that of the guardian of a family. Abu Sulaiman said: "One should not trouble his family by forcing them to asceticism. But he might rather invite them to it: If they respond to him, that is good, otherwise he should leave them and do what he likes with himself." But this requires, on the other hand, that he himself should not respond to them in what is beyond the limit of moderateness. Let him learn from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when he left the house of Fatimah "Allah be pleased with her" for the curtain and two heart-shaped bracelets, for this belong to adornment and not the necessary things for living.

It seems clear then that seeking majesty and property is not forbidden in itself as long as it serves the need, and what is forbidden is that which goes beyond the need. What goes beyond the need is a deadly poison and what

serves the need is beneficial medicine. Between both extremes, there are many degrees. It is forbidden to drink poison, where as it is obligatory to get medicine; and what is between them is suspicious. Whoever takes precautions does so for himself, and whoever indulges in it does so with himself. But whoever clears himself for the sake of his religion, and leaves what arouses suspicion to what does not arouse suspicion, and restricts himself only to the necessary, belongs to the saved sect. whoever limits himself to only what is necessary should not be attributed to the world in so much as to the hereafter. That is because this necessary is the core of religion, for it is its perquisite and an integral part of it.

This is attested by the narration that Abraham "peace be upon him", the bosom friend of Allah Almighty, became once in need, and he went to ask one of his companions for a loan, and his companion gave him nothing. He returned in a state of grief. Allah revealed to him: "Had you asked your bosom friend (Allah), surely, He would have given you." He replied: "O Lord! I know your aversion for (the splendor of) this world, and so I felt afraid to ask You for anything of it." Allah Almighty revealed to him: "No doubt, the need does not belong to (the splendor of) this world."

What is equal to the need then belongs to religion, and what is beyond that to this world. Woe to him who dies while his heart is attached to this world, for on the Day of Judgement, he would be veiled from (the light and glory of) Allah Almighty, and it is those veiled from Allah whom the fire would touch, and none else. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Verily, from (the Light of) their Lord, that Day, will they be veiled. Further, they will enter the Fire of Hell." (Al-Mutaffifin 15-16)

﴿ كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ۝ ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا۟ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ۝ ﴾

The ranks of punishment with fire follow the pain of that veil, although the pain of the veil itself is sufficient for torment and punishment. We ask Allah Almighty to inculcate in our hearings what He inspired to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when it was said to him: "Love whomever you love (it is of no avail) for you would leave him (by death)."

When it was revealed to the devotees of Allah Almighty that the servant helps destroy himself by virtue of his deeds and following his inclinations, they left the world entirely. Al-Hassan said: "I saw seventy from Badr warriors, all of whom were abstinent from what was made lawful for them by Allah in the same way as you are in what was made by Allah unlawful for you. Had you seen them, you would have ascribed them to madness, and had they seen the best among you, they would have say that they would have no share (in the hereafter); and had they seen the evil among you they would have said that those never believe in the Day of Reckoning. Whenever the lawful property was offered to anyone of them, he would reject it saying: "I feel afraid it would corrupt my heart on me."" Of a surety, whoever has a sound heart like them should feel afraid of becoming corrupt on him. As for those whose hearts died because of the love for this world, Allah Almighty told about them saying: "Those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, but are pleased and satisfied with the life of the Present,

and those who heed not Our Signs, Their abode is the Fire, because of the (evil) they earned." (Yunus 7-8)

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا وَرَضُوا۟ بِٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱطْمَأَنُّوا۟ بِهَا وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ ءَايَـٰتِنَا غَـٰفِلُونَ (٧) أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ (٨)﴾

He Almighty further said: " nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds." (Al-Kahf 28)

﴿وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا (٢٨)﴾

He also said: " Therefore shun those who turn away from Our Message and desire nothing but the life of this world. That is as far as knowledge will reach them. Verily your Lord knows best those who stray from His Path, and He knows best those who receive guidance." (An-Najm 29-30)

﴿فَأَعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا (٢٩) ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ (٣٠)﴾

For this reason, a man said to Jesus "peace be upon him": "Take me with you in your tour." He said to him: "Then, give out your property and then follow me." He said: "I could not do so." On that Jesus "peace be upon him" said: "The Wealthy could hardly enter Paradise." A wise man said: "There is no day on which the sun rises but that four angels from the four directions of the land call, two from the East and other two from the West. One of those in the East says: "O seeker of good! Come to do good! O seeker of evil! Hold back yourself!" The other says: "O Allah! Recompense the one who spends (in charity), and damage the property of him who withholds (it from spending in the Cause of Allah)." As for those in the West, one of them says: "Keep away from death and rather build for destruction." The other says: "Eat and enjoy for the long reckoning."

CHAPTER FIVE
EXPOSITION OF SIGNS OF ASCETICISM

It should be known that one might think, though falsely, that whoever leaves property is an ascetic; and it is not so, for to leave property and claim austerity is easy on him who likes to be praised for asceticism. How many a monk who reduces himself to a very little quantity of food daily, and lives in a hermitage without a gate, but just for the sake of showing his state to the people, perchance they would appreciate and praise him. But even, this does not indicate to asceticism incisively. Asceticism should include both property and majesty in order to be complete. Some people might claim asceticism, although they put on expensive wool and fine clothes.

Consider the account given by Al-Khawas in description of the asceticism claimants: "A people claim asceticism and at the same time put on the expensive clothes, in order to deceive the people perchance they would give them as gifts the like of their expensive clothes, and not see them with the

same eye with which they see the poor with contempt, and thus give them the same as they give the poor and indigent. They claim knowledge and that they belong to sunnah, and that things are given to them although they keep away from them, and that they take just for the sake of those other than them. It is those who eat the world with religion. They are not concerned with purifying their intention, nor with edifying their morals. They indeed are inclined to this world, and following their passions and desires." However, to know the ascetic is problematic, for the state of the ascetic himself is problematic in relation to him too.

Any way, there are three signs on which the ascetic should depend within himself: the first is that he should neither exult for a present thing, nor grieve for a lost thing, in compliance with the statement of Allah Almighty: " In order that you may not despair over matters that pass you by, nor exult over favours bestowed upon you. For Allah loves not any vainglorious boaster." (Al-Hadid 23)

﴿ لِّكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

He should rather be in opposition to that: he should grieve for the existence of wealth, and exult for losing it.

The second sign is that both his praiser and dispraiser should be equal in his sight. The first is the sign of abstinence in property, and the second is the sign of majesty.

The third sign is that his intimacy and sociability with Allah Almighty prevail over his heart. That is indeed the sweetness of obedience, and the heart could hardly be free from the sweetness of love. Love is either for this world or for Allah Almighty. But both never gather in one heart. It is indeed, the love for Allah Almighty, which should occupy the heart entirely, with nothing to share with it. For this reason, one of them was asked: "To what thing did asceticism lead them?" He said: "To being affable and sociable with Allah."

Some Gnostics said: "If faith is attached to the outward of the heart, it would love both the world and hereafter and work for them together; and if faith is attached to the inward of the heart, it would hate this world, and not work for it at all." According to Abu Sulaiman: "Whoever engages in himself is indeed occupied from the people – and this is the station of the workers; and whoever engages in his Lord is indeed occupied from himself – and this is the station of the Gnostics." The ascetic should be in one of both stations. In his first station, he engages himself with himself, and at that point, both existence and nonexistence, praise and dispraise become equal to him.

But he does not become really ascetic just because he has little property. Ibn Abu Al-Hawari asked Abu Sulaiman: "Was Dawud At-Ta'i an ascetic?" he answered in the affirmative. He further exclaimed: "But I have learnt that he inherited twenty Dinars from his father which he withheld and spent along twenty years. Then, how should he be considered an ascetic?" On that he said: "You mean that he should fulfill the reality of asceticism, whereas if you intend the finale, you should know that there is no finale for asceticism for the attributes of the soul are very numerous. The asceticism would not be perfect unless one

abstains from all of them. But whoever leaves anything in this world, given that he is able to get it, simply for fear of his heart and religion, should have a share in asceticism as much as is equal to what he leaves. The highest degree is to leave all things other than Allah Almighty, and even taking a cushion from a stone, as did Jesus "peace be upon him".

The sign of asceticism, in sum, is to have all things equal to you, be it richness or poverty, praise or dispraise, and so on. Of course, there are many subsequent signs, like, for instance, to leave the world careless of to whom it is given. It is said that its sign is to leave the world as it is, without seeking to do anything in it. According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh, the sign of asceticism is to be openhanded with what is available. According to Ibn Khafif, its sign is to get comforted with leaving kingdom. It is also, according to him, that the self abstains from this world with no difficulty. According to Abu Sulaiman: "Wool is one of the characteristics of asceticism. So, none should put on wool for three Dirhams while he has a desire for five." According to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and Sufyan: "The sign of asceticism is the short hope." According to Sari: "The living of the ascetic does not become pleasant if he engages from himself, and the living of the Gnostic does not become pleasant if he engages in himself." According to An-Nasrabadhi: "The ascetic is strange in this world, whereas the Gnostic is strange in the hereafter." According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: "The signs of asceticism is three: deed without relation, saying without covet, and honour without authority." A man asked him: "When should I enter the shop of reliance, put on the dress of asceticism and sit in the company of the ascetic?" he said to him: "When you discipline yourself in secrecy to the extent that if Allah withholds form you sustenance for three days, you would not weary. But without attaining that degree, to sit on the carpet of the ascetic is out of ignorance, and I do not feel safe that you would be scandalized." According to As-Sari: "I have practiced asceticism and had power over what I intended from it except the abstinence in the people, which I could not do." According to Al-Fudail: "Allah has made all evil in my house, with its key being the love for this world, and He has made all good in my house, with its key being the abstinence from this world."

That is the reality and rulings of asceticism; and if asceticism is not complete without reliance, let us go to explain it, Allah willing.

Book five: Monotheism and reliance on Allah

This is the fifth book of the quarter of Saviors of the Revival of Religion's Sciences

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah, the regulator of kingdom (of this world) and dominion (of the hereafter), Whose Alone is honor and supremacy, Who elevated the firmaments of heaven without pillars, and decreed therein the sustenance of servants. It is He Who diverted the eyes of those endued with sound hearts and minds from observing the intermediaries and causes to observe only the causer of causes, and removed their concern with anything other than Him, and dependence on any disposer other than Him. They worship none but He, putting in mind that he is Allah the One and Only, the Absolute, Eternal, and that all the creatures are but servants like them, with whom no sustenance is sought, and that there is no atom but that its creation is due to Allah Almighty, and there is no creeping creature but that its sustenance is incumbent upon Allah Almighty. When they were certain that He ensures and guarantees the sustenance of His servants, they put their trust in Him saying: "Allah suffices us for the best disposer of affairs."

May the blessing and peace of Allah, as much as is fitting for him, be upon Muhammad, the suppresser of falsehood, and the guide to the straight path, as well as upon his family and companions.

Coming to the point: reliance (on Allah) is one of the stations of religion, and one of the positions of the certain (believers). It is among the high degrees of those near to Allah Almighty. But at the same time, it is abstruse and difficult as far as knowledge of and work on it is concerned. The point of abstruseness is that to observe and depend only on the causes and means contradicts monotheism and rather leads to polytheism. But to leave them all is to have doubt in the sunnah and criticize Sharia. To depend on causes and means without seeing them is to change the validity of mind and rather plunge into ignorance. It is too difficult and abstruse to verify of the significance of reliance in a way that achieves harmony between monotheism, Sharia and transmitted texts. None has the power to disclose that issue but the great learned whom Allah has endowed from His favor and bounty with the light of facts, thereupon they saw and verified, and then talked about what they witnessed, once they were asked to talk.

Now, we are going, Allah willing, to adopt the following methodology in this book:

We shall begin with exposition of the virtue of reliance (on Allah Almighty) as introductory to the book

Then, we shall follow up with the first part, which will be about monotheism (Tawhid)

Then, we shall talk about the state and work of reliance on Allah Almighty in the second part.

INTRODUCTION
EXPOSITION OF VIRTUE OF RELIANCE ON ALLAH

From among the Qur'anic Holy Verses, a mention may be made of the following:

Allah Almighty said: " But on Allah put your trust if you have faith." (Al-Ma'idah 23)

﴿ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوٓاْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

He further said: "and let all that trust put their trust on Him." (Yusuf 67)

﴿ وَعَلَيْهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴾

He said too: " And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is (Allah) for him." (At-Talaq 3)

﴿ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُۥٓ ﴾

He also said: " put your trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)." (Al Imran 159)

﴿ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴾

How excellent is a position in which one attains the love and sufficiency of Allah Almighty. Whomever Allah Almighty suffices, cares, and loves has indeed achieved a great felicity. By no means would the beloved be punished, removed or even veiled (from his lover).

Allah Almighty further said: " Is not Allah enough for His servant?" (Az-Zumar 36)

﴿ أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُۥ ﴾

Indeed, whoever demands sufficiency from, and relies on anyone other than Allah Almighty denies and belies this Holy statement. The interrogation here is intended to decide the truth with certainty, like the statement of Allah Almighty: " Has there not been over Man a long period of Time, when he was nothing, (not even) mentioned?" (Al-Insan 1)

﴿ هَلْ أَتَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ حِينٌ مِّنَ ٱلدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْـًٔا مَّذْكُورًا ﴾

Allah said too: "But if any trust in Allah, behold! Allah is Exalted in might, Wise." (Al-Anfal 49)

﴿ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

He is exalted in might in the sense that whoever takes shelter to Him is never humiliated, and whoever resorts to Him never loses protection. Furthermore, He is Wise in the sense that He never falls short of regulating the affairs of him who relies on His manipulation.

Allah Almighty says too: "Verily those whom you call upon besides Allah are servants like unto you: call upon them, and let them listen to your prayer, if you are (indeed) truthful!" (Al-A'raf 194)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ ۖ فَٱدْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُواْ لَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴾

He showed that anyone other than Him is but a subjugated servant, whose need is like yours: then, who could dare to rely on him? He also said: " The things that you worship besides Allah have no power to give you sustenance: then seek you sustenance from Allah, serve Him, and be grateful to Him: to Him will be your return." (Al-Ankabut 17)

﴿ إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا وَتَخْلُقُونَ إِفْكًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا فَٱبْتَغُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرِّزْقَ وَٱعْبُدُوهُ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۖ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

He also said: " But to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth; but the Hypocrites understand not." (Al-Munafiqun 7)

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ خَزَآئِنُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

He said: "regulating and governing all things. No intercessor (can plead with Him) except after His leave (has been obtained). This is Allah your Lord; Him therefore serve you: will yet not receive admonition?" (Yunus 3)

﴿ مَا مِن شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

Concerning the Prophet Hadiths, a mention may be made of the following:

It is narrated that Allah's Apostle "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “Nations were displayed before me; I saw a Prophet passing by with a few followers; a Prophet passing by with a man or two (of his followers); and a Prophet passing by with nobody. Then a big crowd of people passed in front of me whom I thought to be my followers. It was said: “No. It is Moses “Peace be upon him” and his followers. but, look at the horizon.” Behold! There was a multitude of people (filling the horizon). Then it was said to me: “Look there and there about the stretching sky!” Behold! There was a multitude of people (filling the horizon). It was said to me: “This is your nation out of whom seventy thousand shall enter Paradise with neither reckoning nor torture” .” Then The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" entered his house without telling his companions who they (the 70,000) were. So the people started talking about the issue. Some of them said: "They might be those, who (believed in and) accompanied The Messenger of Allah “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him”.” Others said: “They might be those, who have been born in the Islamic era, and have not associated anything with Allah (in worship).” They mentioned other things. Then, The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out and asked them: “What is that about which you are talking?” they told him. Upon this he said: "They are those who do not treat themselves by practising charm, or asking others to practice it, nor do they believe in bad or good omen (from birds etc.). But they put their trust (only) in their Lord.” On that, Ukashah Ibn Muhsin got up and said: "Invoke Allah for me to be one of them.” The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "You would be one of them.” Then another person got up and said: "Invoke Allah for me to be one of them". The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Ukashah has anticipated you.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further

said: "Were you to rely on Allah Almighty as it is fitting for him, He would sustain you in the same way as He sustains birds: they go hungry early every morning and return satiated in the evening." (At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim on the authority of Ibn Umar).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever devotes himself wholeheartedly to Allah Almighty, He Almighty suffices him all subsistence, and sustains him from wherever he expects not; and whoever dedicates himself to this world, Allah Almighty entrusts him to it." (At-Tabarani, Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Imran Ibn Hussain).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever is pleased to be the richest of the people, let him be sure of what is with Allah Almighty more than of what is in his hand." (Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

It is narrated from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that whenever his family were given to hunger he would say to them: "Stand up to perform prayer." He used to say in this context: "With that my Lord Almighty commanded me." He recited: " Enjoin prayer on your people, and be constant therein. We ask you not to provide sustenance: We provide it for you. But the (fruit of) the Hereafter is for righteousness." (Ta Ha 132)

﴿ وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَوٰةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا ۖ لَا نَسْـَٔلُكَ رِزْقًا ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ ۗ وَالْعَـٰقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ (132) ﴾

(At-Tabarani on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Salam).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "Whoever seeks charm or gets himself cauterized has indeed not relied on Allah Almighty." (At-Tabarani, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Al-Mughirah Ibn Shu'bah).

It is narrated that when Gabriel "peace be upon him" said to Abraham "peace be upon him" as he was thrown away into the fire with the catapult: "Do you have a need?" he "peace be upon him" said to him: "As for a need from you, it is not." He said so in fulfillment of His engagements as stated by Allah: "Allah suffices me for the best disposer of affairs." He said it when he was being thrown away, thereupon Allah Almighty revealed: " And of Abraham who fulfilled his engagements." (An-Najm 37)

﴿ وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ الَّذِى وَفَّىٰٓ (37) ﴾

Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "O David! No servant holds fast to Me from any of My creatures, and even the earth and heaven make a plan against him, but that I would make a way out for him."

As for the traditions and sayings, a mention may be made of the following:

Once Al-Khawas recited the following statement of Allah: " And put your trust in Him Who lives and dies not; and celebrate His praise; and enough is He to be acquainted with the faults of His servants." (Al-Furqan 58)

﴿ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَىِّ الَّذِى لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِۦ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًا (58) ﴾

Then, he said commenting: "It is not fitting for a servant, after this Holy Verse, to refuge to anyone else other than Allah Almighty."

It was said to one of the religious scholars during his sleep: "Whoever is confident of Allah Almighty has indeed got his sustenance."

Another religious scholar said: "Let not the guaranteed sustenance divert you from the work that is enjoined upon you, with the result that you would waste your hereafter and get from this world no more than what has been doomed by Allah Almighty to you."

According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: "In the presence of a servant, getting sustenance without seeking for it indicates that sustenance is commanded to seek the servant." Ibrahim Ibn Adham said: "I asked a monk from where he eats, and he said to me: "The knowledge of that is not with me. But ask my Lord from where he feeds me." Haram Ibn Hayyan asked Uwais Al-Qarni: "Where do you command me to go and live?" He beckoned to Sham. He asked: "Then, how is living there?" He said: "Woe to those hearts with which doubt has mixed thereupon no admonition could avail them." Another one said: "Once I accept Allah as the best disposer of my affairs, I find a way to every kind of good." We ask Allah Almighty to provide us with the good etiquettes.

PART ONE: MONOTHEISM

CHAPTER ON EXPOSITION OF THE REAL NATURE OF MONOTHEISM, WHICH IS THE FOUNDATION OF RELIANCE

It should be known to you that reliance (on Allah) belongs to faith; and all items of faith consist of knowledge, state and work. The same is true of reliance, which consists of knowledge, which is the foundation, work, which is the fruit, and state which is intended by the name reliance.

Let's begin with the knowledge which is the foundation. It is called faith in language, for faith in general is to believe in something with the heart, and every kind of trust with the heart is knowledge, and once it is strong, it is called certainty (of faith). There are numerous branches under certainty of faith. We need of them only that on which we could establish reliance, i.e. monotheism, translated by your statement: "There is none worthy of worship except for Allah alone, Who has no partner", faith in the power which is translated by your statement: "Whose is the dominion", and faith in munificence and wise which is indicated by your statement: "To Him be all perfect praise". Whoever then says: "There is none worthy of worship except for Allah Alone Who has no partner, Whose is the dominion and to Whom be all perfect praise, and He has power over all things", his faith would become perfect, I mean the faith which is the foundation of reliance, or in other words, this statement would become an attribute inherent to his heart.

As for monotheism, it is the foundation. It is too long to discuss in detail. It indeed belongs to the sciences of revelation (Mukashafah). But many of Mukashafah sciences are relevant to works through the states in such a way that the science of practical religion (Mu'amalah) could not be achieved without them. So, we should not explain but only what is relevant to the science of practical religion, otherwise, monotheism becomes like an infinite ocean. Let's say that

monotheism is of four ranks: the core, the core of the core, the husk, and the husk of the husk. It is like a nut which has two external husks, and a core and fat inside it called the core of the core.

The first rank is that man says with his tongue: "There is none worthy of worship except for Allah", while his heart is heedless of or denying it; and this is like the monotheism of the hypocrites.

The second is that his heart gives trust to the meaning of the statement just as the common Muslims believe in general; and this is the faith of the laymen among Muslims.

The third is to view that by way of revelation, i.e. through the lights of the truth; and that is the station of these close to Allah Almighty. It is to see many things, but see all coming from the One and Irresistible, i.e. Allah Almighty.

The fourth is to see in the whole existence only One, i.e. Allah Almighty. That is the contemplation of the sincere affirmers and lovers of truth. It is what the Sufis call self-consumption for the sake of monotheism, for as a Sufi sees only One, he does not see himself, and as he does not see himself as being engrossed in monotheism, he thus consumes himself for the sake of monotheism, i.e. he fails to see himself or anyone else in existence.

The one of the first rank is a monotheist only by his tongue, which protects him in this world from being killed. The second is a monotheist with his heart, i.e. he believes with his heart in what he testifies with his tongue. It becomes then a knot on his heart, with no expansion of the breast for more. It indeed keeps one from the punishment in the hereafter if he dies on it, and its knot does not weaken by sins. There are many tricks to be done (by Satan) to weaken and dissolve that knot called religious innovations, and others to avert them intended to straighten and tighten that knot on the heart, called scholastic theology, and the knowledgeable of it is called scholastic theologian. He stands on the other extreme opposite to the religious innovator, for his work is to avert the religious innovator from dissolving or weakening this knot in the hearts of men. The scholastic theologian might be called a monotheist in the sense that he protects, with his speech, the concept of monotheism in order for its knot not to get loosened in the hearts of the laymen. The third also is a monotheist as he does not contemplate but one doer and maker, since the truth is revealed to him as it is, and does not see in reality but one doer and maker, since the truth is disclosed to him as it is. The fourth is a monotheist as nothing is present in his contemplation but the One and Only: he does not see all things as many but as One. That is the highest finale of monotheism.

The first is like the nut's outer husk, the second like the internal husk, the third like the core, and the fourth like the fat that is extracted from the core. To be sure, there is no good in the nut's outer husk, and if it is eaten, it would taste bitter, and if it is seen from within, it would seem odious, and if it is taken as fire wood, it would extinguish the fire and intensify smoke, and if it is left in the house, it would make narrow the place: in other words, it has no benefit other than to be left for a time on the nut to maintain it after which it should be removed from it and thrown away. Similarly, monotheism only with the tongue,

regardless of the trust of the heart is of no use, but rather it has much harm and is outwardly and inwardly blameworthy. But it benefits for some time to keep the internal husk until the time of death; and the internal husk stands for the heart and body. The monotheism of the hypocrite saves his body from the sword of the fighters, for they were not commanded to split open the hearts (to know what is lurking in them). The sword affects only the body, which stands for the husk, and the soul leaves the body after death, and in this way, no significance remains for his monotheism.

It is true that the internal husk is beneficial in comparison with the outer husk, as it protects the core and keep it from damage, and if it is removed from the nut, it could be used as fire wood. But it is less significant than the core. Similarly, only belief without uncovering (the reality of faith) has much benefit in comparison with only the utterance, though is less significant in comparison with faith that is accompanied by uncovering and contemplation, which occurs by the breast expansion in order for the light of faith to enter and shine in it. It is this expansion which is intended by the statement of Allah Almighty: "Those whom Allah (in His plan) wills to guide, He opens their breast to Islam; those whom He wills to leave straying, He makes their breast close and constricted." (Al-An'am 125)

﴿ فَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَهْدِيَهُۥ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ ۖ وَمَن يُرِدْ أَن يُضِلَّهُۥ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُۥ ضَيِّقًا ﴾

And: "Is one whose heart Allah has opened to Islam, so that he has received enlightenment from Allah, (no better than one hard-hearted)?" (Az-Zumar 22)

﴿ أَفَمَن شَرَحَ ٱللَّهُ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ ﴾

Furthermore, although the core is precious in itself, as it is that which is intended from the nut, at the same time, it is not completely free from the admixtures that result from juice in comparison with the fat that is extracted from it. Similarly, the monotheism by acts and deeds is the high purpose of the followers of the path. But it is not completely free from the admixtures of paying attention to others, and turning to the things in comparison with him who does not see but Allah the One and Real.

You may argue: "How could it be imaginable that one does not see but One, given that he sees the heaven and the earth, and all the physical bodies, and they are numerous? How should the numerous be only one?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that this is the highest finale of the sciences of Revelation (Mukashafah), whose mysteries are impermissible to be lined in a book. According to the Gnostics: "To divulge the mystery of lordship is disbelief." It also does not pertain to the science of practical religion (Mu'amalah). It is true that the same thing might be seen as one by a particular kind of vision and according to a certain consideration, and numerous by another kind of vision and according to another consideration. Take, for example, the man who might look at himself and seem to himself numerous if he views himself as a composite of a soul, a body, organs, limbs, veins, nerves, bones, flesh. but according to another vision, and by another consideration, he seems only one as being only one man (i.e. one entity). He is one in relation to humankind. How many a man who sees

another and it does not occur to his mind the numerous things of which he consists.

Similarly, all that is in existence, the Creator and the creatures, have many considerations and perspectives from which they could be seen. By one consideration, all might seem only one, and by another consideration, they might seem numerous. It is only in this way that you should abandon your rejection of that high station in which you might not have attained the degree of giving trust to it; and with this faith of yours in such monotheism, you would have a share from it, just as if you believe in Prophethood although you yourself are not a Prophet, you would have a share from it, as much as is equal to the power of your faith.

This contemplation in which only the One and Real appears, sometimes remains long and sometimes sparks and flashes like the swift lightning, and this is more prevailing than the first, which happens only in rare cases. To this Al-Hussain Ibn Mansur referred when he saw Al-Khawas going here and there on journeys, thereupon he asked him: "What are those journeys of yours?" he said: "I am on the way to rectify my status of reliance." Indeed, he was one of the reliant (on Allah Almighty). On that Al-Hussain said to him: "No doubt, you have consumed your lifetime in the construction of your inside, then, where is the similar self-consumption in monotheism?" Al-Khawas seemed to have intended to rectify the third station of monotheism, thereupon Al-Hussain demanded him to move up to the fourth station. Those are the different stations of the monotheists in brief.

You may argue: "But, an explanation is needed in order to know and understand how reliance is based on it." In reply, let me say that as for the fourth station, none could dare to speak about it. Furthermore, reliance is not built on it. The reliance might happen depending on the third station. As for the first station, i.e. the monotheism of the hypocrite, it is clear hypocrisy, and it is self-evident. As for the second, i.e. the belief, it is common to the laymen of Muslims, and the ways to affirm it by theology, and avert the tricks of religious innovators are included in the sciences of scholastic theology. It is the third station that on which the reliance is built. So, let's make a mention of it to the extent to which reliance is relevant, without the details that are beyond the power of such a book.

It means that it is revealed to you that there is no actor or maker but Allah Almighty the Creator, and everything in existence, sustenance, withholding and giving, death, poverty, richness, etc: all is invented and created by Allah Almighty, with Whom there is no partner. Once this is revealed to you, you would not see anything else: but your fear would be from Him, your hope would be in Him, your confidence would be of Him, and your reliance would be on Him, for He is the sole Actor and maker, and anything other than Him are subjugated and could not alone move even a single gnat in the dominion of the heavens and the earth. If the gate of revelation is opened to you, this fact seems clearer to you than when you see it with the eyes.

It is Satan who keeps you off that monotheism, in a station in which he seeks to place the stain of polytheism in your hearts through two means: the

first is to turn to the choice of living beings; and the second is to turn to the non-living beings. An example of turning to non-living beings is your dependence on rain in producing plants, on the cloud in the rainfall, on the air in gathering the clouds, and on the wind in balancing the ship, and so on. All of this is out of polytheism and ignorance of the real nature of monotheism. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty:

" And when they board a ship, they supplicate Allah , sincere to Him in religion. But when He delivers them to the land, at once they associate others with Him." (Al-Ankabut 65)

﴿ فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا۟ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ ﴾

It is said in its interpretation that they say that had it been for the wind, they would not have been saved.

If the real nature of the world is revealed to anyone, he comes to know that the wind is no more than the air which could not move by itself in the absence of a mover, and so he goes on associations until he reaches the first Mover for Whom there is none to move, nor is He movable, i.e. Allah Almighty. It is He Almighty Who moves and acts and not the servant, although it seems to himself that he acts and makes. This meaning is clear in the statement of Allah: "when you threw (a handful of dust), it was not your act, but Allah's." (Al-Anfal 17)

﴿ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَمَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

Once it is revealed to you that all things in the heavens and on earth are but subjugated creatures, Satan turns away from you disappointed, in despair of mixing your monotheism with the stain of polytheism.

But at this stage, he comes to you through the other means, i.e. to make you turn to the choice of living beings in the voluntary acts. He says to you: "How could you see all things from Allah although you see that this man gives you your sustenance willingly, and he could give you if he so likes, or withhold from you if he so likes? It is this man who could chop off your head with his sword, and he has power over you, in the sense that he could behead you if he so likes, or give you life if he so likes. So, how should you not fear him? How should you not put your hope in him? Your affair is in his hand: A fact which you see clearly with your eyes."

At that point, most people slipped, save the sincere and truthful servants of Allah Almighty, over whom Satan has no authority. But he whose heart and breast are not expanded for the light of Allah, falls short of observing the real nature of the Compeller of the heavens and the earth, and seeing that He is irresistible from behind all things in existence; and that is, to be sure, evident ignorance. Indeed, the masters of hearts are on the opposite extreme, to whom Allah Almighty made every gnat and atom in the heavens and on earth speak, announcing His power, with which everything spoke, and they heard their glorifications and magnifications of Allah Almighty, and witness of their failure without that power. This is not heard by those who depend only on their apparent hearing which does not go beyond sounds, and of course it is not this

which I mean, for both man and animals share in it. But I really mean hearing that perceives words with neither sound nor letters, neither in Arabic nor in any other language.

But you may argue: "That is a far-fetched miracle, which is beyond the reach of the mind. Anyway, describe to me how it speaks, and with which it speaks, and how it glorifies and magnifies Allah, and how it witnesses to itself of failure." In reply to that, it should be known to you that every gnat and atom has a private conversation in secret in the sight of the masters of hearts. This secret private conversation is infinite for it stems from the endless oceans of words of Allah Almighty: "Say: "If the ocean were ink (wherewith to write out) the words of my Lord. Sooner would the ocean be exhausted than would the words of my Lord, even if we added another ocean like it, for its aid."" (Al-Kahf 109)

﴿ قُل لَّوْ كَانَ ٱلْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِّكَلِمَٰتِ رَبِّى لَنَفِدَ ٱلْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَن تَنفَدَ كَلِمَٰتُ رَبِّى وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِۦ مَدَدًا ﴿١٠٩﴾ ﴾

On the other hand, it speaks in private with the mysteries of the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and it is out of wickedness to divulge the mysteries. That is because the breasts of the free men act as the graves of mysteries. Have you ever seen that a keeper of a king's mysteries divulged the mysteries of his king in public? If it is permissible to divulge every secret, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" would not have said: "Were you to know what I know, you would laugh little and weep much." He rather mentioned that to them in order to weep much and laugh but little. He would not also have been forbidden to divulge the mystery of the Divine Decree, saying: "If stars are mentioned, then, you should abstain from talk; and when the Divine decree is mentioned, you should also abstain from talk; and when my companions are mentioned (with evil), you should abstain from talk." (At-Tabarani and Ibn Hibban). He would not also have favored Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him" with some secrets.

There are two impediments from divulging the private talk of the gnats and atoms of the heavens and earth with the masters of hearts: the first is the impossibility to divulge the mystery. The other is that their words are infinite and incalculable.

In sum, the mover, maker and actor of all things is only One, i.e. Allah Almighty, other than Whom there is no deity. All things other than him in existence are but subjugated creatures, under His disposal and command, and within His power: He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Hidden. One might ask: "How should He have two opposing attributes? The first could not be the last, and the evident could not be the hidden." In reply to that, let me say: He is the First in relation to all existing things that emanate from Him Only, one after the other; and He is the Last in relation to the path the followers follow to Him: they indeed continue to move from one station to another until they reach His presence, which is the end of journey. In this way, He is the last in contemplation, and the First in existence. On the other hand, He is the Hidden in relation to those who devote themselves in the world of visibles in pursuit of perceiving Him with their five senses; but He is evident for him who seeks to see

Him on the light of the illumination of the heart with the deep insight that penetrates into the dominion of the invisibles. That is the way of monotheism of the followers of the path of monotheism in acting, i.e. those to whom it has been revealed that the actor and maker is only One.

You may argue: "Then, the conclusion is that this monotheism is built on the faith in the dominion of the invisibles. But whoever does not understand it, or even rejects it, what would his treatment be?" In reply to that, let me say that as for him who rejects the dominion of the invisibles, there is no remedy for him or at least his treatment is very difficult.

As for him who does not reject in so much as he does not understand, the followers of the path should first consider his eye with which he sees the dominion of the invisibles: if it is sound, but stained with blackness which is anyway remediable, let them engage in removing that blackness and cleaning it, and once it is repaired, he should be instructed to the path to follow it. This is just what the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did with his private companions. But in case it is not remediable, then, he would have no power to follow the path we have previously mentioned in monotheism, nor to hear the private conversation of the gnats and atoms of the kingdom of the visibles and the dominion of the invisibles only depending upon the testimony of monotheism. In this way, they talk to him with sounds and letters, for in the world of the visibles, there is also a kind of monotheism. Every one endued with mind knows that the house which has two lords would be vulnerable to corruption, and the same is true of the country when it has two rulers. He thus is addressed according to the capacity of his mind, and told that the Lord of all the worlds is only One, and the ordainer is only one, for indeed " If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides Allah, there would have been confusion in both! But glory to Allah, the Lord of the Throne: (High is He) above what they attribute to Him!" (Al-Anbiya 22)

﴿ لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

Thus, on the basis of his experiences and observations in the world of visibles, the belief of monotheism is planted in his heart in a way that befits his mind. Allah Almighty obligated the Prophets "peace be upon them" to address the people according to their limited minds, and this is why the Holy Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language in accordance with the Arabic style of discourse.

You may argue: "Is this monotheism based on belief fitting to be a foundation and principle of reliance?" In reply to that, let me answer in the affirmative. However, if the belief becomes strong, it gives the same effect of revelation in arousing the states. But unfortunately it often weakens and is soon exposed to trouble and shake. For this reason, the one as such needs a scholastic theologian to protect him with his theology, or to learn theology by himself in order to guard his belief and faith. But whoever sees the path and follows it by himself, there is no fear on him. The example of those of only belief in comparison with those of revelation is but like the example of the Pharaoh's sorcerers in comparison with the companions of Samiri. Since the sorcerers of

Pharaoh knew, through their long experience and practice, the furthest point to which the effect of magic might reach, and when they saw from Moses "peace be upon him" what went beyond the limit of magic, and the real nature of the matter was revealed to them, they gave no care at all to the Pharaoh's threat to them: "Be sure I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will cause you all to die on the cross..." They said: "Never shall we regard you as more than the Clear Signs that have come to us or than Him Who created us! So decree whatever you desire to decree: for you can only decree (touching) the life of this world." (Ta Ha 71-72)

﴿ قَالَ ءَامَنتُمْ لَهُۥ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحْرَ ۖ فَلَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَـٰفٍ وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ فِى جُذُوعِ ٱلنَّخْلِ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ أَيُّنَآ أَشَدُّ عَذَابًا وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿٧١﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْثِرَكَ عَلَىٰ مَا جَآءَنَا مِنَ ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ وَٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنَا ۖ فَٱقْضِ مَآ أَنتَ قَاضٍ ۖ إِنَّمَا تَقْضِى هَـٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَآ ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

That is because revelation and clarification always prevent change. Those are unlike the companions of Samiri, who, because their belief was based only on what appeared to them from the snake, so, when they saw the calf made to them by Samiri and heard a sound coming out of it, they soon changed and hearkened to his saying: "This is your god, and the god of Moses."

But even, "Could they not see that it could not return them a word (for answer), and that it had not power either to harm them or to do them good?" (Ta Ha 89)

﴿ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَلَّا يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَوْلًا وَلَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ﴿٨٩﴾ ﴾

Whoever bases his belief only on the outward show of a snake is more likely apt to disbelieve when he sees a calf for both belong to the world of visibles, and things in the world of visibles are contradictory. This defect is missing in the dominion of invisibles for it belongs to Allah Almighty.

You may argue: "All you have mentioned concerning monotheism is evident, even in the matter of the intermediaries: all things are subjugated, except in the human movements: it is learnt that man moves whenever he wills and stops whenever he wills. So, how could he be subjugated?" in reply to that, it should be known to you, that even if man wills to do whenever he likes to will, or does not will to do whenever he does not like to will, it would remain also in this point that one could slip and err. But it is learnt that he does what he wills to do, willingly or unwillingly, for the will, in principle, is not up to him, as had it been up to him, it would have been lacking another will, and so on in an endless series of associations. But, since the will is not up to him, then, once the will that manipulates the power is available, then, the power would be manipulated in willing submission, and would have no way of opposition. To be sure, the movement necessarily results from the power, and the power necessarily moves whenever the will is determined. Those necessities are caused by, and result from each other. The man could, by no means, avert the present will or the manipulating power in subjugating the things decreed. In all, he is forced by necessity.

You may further argue: "This is merely necessitarianism, and necessitarianism

contradicts the freedom of choice, and you do not reject the freedom of choice: Then, how could one have the freedom of choice and also be forced by necessity simultaneously?" In reply to that, let me say that if the cover is lifted, you would learn that one is also forced by necessity even in his choice. That is, he is forced to choose. But how such as does not understand the significance of the freedom of choice learn that? Let's explain the significance of the freedom of choice in brief from the theological perspective but without making it lengthy for this book is intended only to concentrate on the sciences of practical religion.

The verb to act is ascribed to man in three things: it is said that man writes with his fingers, breathes with the help of his lungs and throat, and holes the water once he stands upon its surface with his body. In this way, holing (of the water), breathing and writing are ascribed to him. All three stand on the same footing in relation to necessitarianism, but they have many differences between themselves. Let me express it for you in three phrases: one's holing the water when he is on the surface of the water is a natural act, his breathing is a willful act, and his writing is an optional act. Necessitarianism is clear in the natural act for if one stands on the surface of the water, or jumps up to the air, either the water or the air would inevitably be holed. This holing might occur necessarily after jumping. The same is true of breathing: the movement of the lungs and throat in relation to the will of breathing is like the holing of the water in relation to the weight of the hands. As there is a weight, it should lead to holing after it. But as well as the weight does not go back to him, similarly, the will is not up to him. For this reason, if one's eye is aimed at by a needle, his eyelids would necessarily be folded, and if he likes to leave it open, he would not be able to do so, given that closing the eyes necessarily is a willful act. This then has joined the natural act in so far as it occurs necessarily.

As for the third act, i.e. that which belongs to the freedom of choice, it is the cause of confusion and suspicion, like writing with the fingers, speaking with the tongue and so on. In other words, it is that in which it could be said: "He could do if he so likes, and he could not do if he so likes." Thus, he thinks that the freedom of choice is up to him. But indeed, this is out of ignorance. So, let's reveal it. The will always follows the knowledge whether or not a particular thing agrees with your disposition. Things are divided into those which your external or internal observation judges to agree with you without confusion or hesitation, and those in which the mind might hesitate. What we admit without hesitation is that if anyone aims at your eye with a needle, or at your body with a sword, your knowledge would soon judge, without reluctance or doubt, that averting this from yourself is better to and thus agrees with you. No doubt, in this case, the will is aroused by knowledge, and the power by the will, which leads to the movement of the eyelids to avert the needle, and the movement of the hand to avert the sword. But this happens without reflection or thinking, although it is willful.

The other kind of things in which the mind is confused and hesitates whether or not they agree with one's disposition. It thus needs some reflection and meditation in order to be able to distinguish whether good lies

in doing or leaving that thing. If, by virtue of reflection and meditation, there is knowledge that any of both (doing or leaving) is better, this thing then would join the first kind which needs not reflection nor meditation. In this case too, the will would be stimulated as it is to avert the sword and needle. If the will is stimulated to do an act whose good appears to the mind, it is called the freedom of choice (Ikhtiyar), derived from good (Khayr), i.e. to be stimulated to do what seems to the mind to be good. The freedom of choice then is a particular will to be stimulated by what seems to the mind to be good after reflection and meditation.

It is this reflection and meditation which the mind needs to distinguish between the better of both good things and the worse of both evil things. The will is unimaginable to be stimulated in the absence of sense and imagination or the firm determination of the mind itself. For this reason, if one wants to cut off his neck, he could not do so, not because he has no power to do so, nor because there is no weapon to use, but because he lacks the will that gives rise to the power to do so. This will is lost because it is stimulated by the mind's judgement that this act agrees with the disposition. However, to kill himself does not agree with his disposition. One could, by no means, then kill himself although he has the power to do so unless there is an extremely painful unbearable punishment awaiting him, in which case the mind hesitate to judge which is the worse of both evils. If it becomes preponderant to it, after reflection and meditation, that killing himself is less harmful, and its judgement is decisive in which there is no hesitation, he could kill himself, and if it judges that killing is more harmful, then, he could not kill himself.

In sum, the will is motivated by the judgement of the mind and senses, and the power is motivated by the will, and the movement is motivated by the power, and all are decreed in man even though he does not know. Man is no more than a place where all those things happen in him. But to say that they are up to him is false. That he is forced by necessity means that all what happens in him is subjugated by another one and not by him; and that he has the freedom of choice means that he is a place of will to happen in him by force after the judgement of the mind that this act is good and agrees with his disposition, and in this judgement also he is forced by necessity. In this way, he is forced by necessity to choose. The fire's act of burning is mere necessitarianism, while Allah in His act has full freedom of choice. Man in his act stands in a position between both extremes, for he is forced to choose.

You may argue: "If you adopt the opinion that knowledge gives rise to will, will to power, and power to movement, in such a way that the latter results from the former, this means that at some point, things do not result from the power of Allah Almighty. But at the same time, if you reject this argument, then, what is the significance that some of those are caused by others?" in reply, it should be known to you that to argue that some of those are caused by others in an endless series of associations is evident ignorance. All of this is due to what is called the eternal power, the foundation which all the people are unable to fathom, except those well-established in knowledge, who were able to be acquainted with its

meaning. But anyway, some of those things are caused by others in occurrence in the same way as a conditioned thing occurs after the condition. No will springs from the eternal power except after knowledge, and no knowledge springs except after one's coming into life. As well as it is impossible to say that life does not occur only from the body which is the condition for life, the same applies to all things that seem to be caused by each other. However, some causes might appear to the laymen, and others only to the private to whom the light of the Real is revealed.

Had it not been so, i.e. nothing precedes or delays but with necessary justice and truth, all acts would have occurred in jest: Exalted and Hallowed be Allah from that. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me." (Adh-Dhariyat 56)

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

And: "We created not the heavens, the earth, and all between them, merely in (idle) sport; We created them not except for just ends: but most of them do not understand." (Ad-Dukhan 38-39)

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَٰعِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ مَا خَلَقْنَٰهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ ﴾

All that is between the heaven and the earth occurs according to an obligatory order and necessary truth, and it is not imagined to be different from what is really is, and in accordance with the very order in which it exists. On the basis of that, nothing precedes or delays but in expectation of its prerequisite. anything conditioned is impossible to precede its condition. The knowledge does not join the dropped sperm but for the loss of the condition of life, nor does will after knowledge but for the loss of the condition of knowledge, and so on. All of this is subject to an obligatory method and necessary manipulation made by the Real, which does not occur by chance or in idle sport.

You may argue: "Then, how could monotheism in that sense be combined with Sharia? The purpose of monotheism is to affirm all acts to Allah Almighty, since He is the sole doer and maker, whereas the purpose of Sharia is to affirm all acts to servants. Then, if the servant is the doer, how could Allah Almighty be the doer? If Allah is the sole doer, then, how could a servant be a doer?" in reply, let me say that this is really too hard to understand if the doer has only one meaning. But if it has two meanings, it might be understandable. It is said, for example: "The ruler has killed so and so" and "The executer has killed so and so." But the ruler is a killer in one sense, and the executer is a killer in another sense. Similarly, the servant is a doer in one sense, and Allah Almighty is the doer in another sense. The act of Allah Almighty is that He is the inventor, creator and originator and causer of existence, and the act of the servant is that he is the place in which the power is created after will was created in it, after the knowledge had been created in it too. In this way, power is related to will, and movement to power just as the conditioned is related to the condition, whereas all is related to the

power of Allah Almighty in the same way as the caused is related to the cause, and the invented to the inventor. Anything related to a certain power, the holder of the power is called an actor. In this sense, both the ruler and the executer are called killers, for killing is related to their power but from two different perspectives.

For this reason, Allah Almighty attributes acts in the Qur'an sometimes to the angels, sometimes to the servants and sometimes to Himself. Consider the following Holy statements:

" Say: "The Angel of Death, put in charge of you, will (duly) take your souls then shall you be brought back to your Lord."" (As-Sajdah 11)

﴿ ۞ قُلْ يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم مَّلَكُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ٱلَّذِى وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

"It is Allah that takes the souls (of men) at death." (Az-Zumar 42)

﴿ ٱللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾

"See you the seed that you sow in the ground?" (Al-Waqi'ah 63)

﴿ أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَحْرُثُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ ﴾

In this Holy Verse, He Almighty attributed the act to us, His servants. Then, He said in another Holy Verse: " For that We pour forth water in abundance, And We split the earth in fragments, And produce therein Corn, And Grapes and nutritious Plants, And Olives and Dates, And enclosed Gardens, dense with lofty trees, And Fruits and Fodder, For use and convenience to you and your cattle." (Abasa 25-32)

﴿ أَنَّا صَبَبْنَا ٱلْمَآءَ صَبًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ شَقًّا ﴿٢٦﴾ فَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَعِنَبًا وَقَضْبًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٩﴾ وَحَدَآئِقَ غُلْبًا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَفَٰكِهَةً وَأَبًّا ﴿٣١﴾ مَّتَٰعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَٰمِكُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

Then, He Almighty said: "then We sent to her Our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects." (Maryam 17)

﴿ فَأَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

Then He said: " We breathed into her of Our Spirit, and We made her and her son a Sign for all peoples." (Al-Anbiya 91)

﴿فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِن رُّوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَٰهَا وَٱبْنَهَآ ءَايَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ ﴾

But it was Gabriel "peace be upon him" who undertook the process of breathing into her. It is like His statement: " But when We have promulgated it, follow you its recital (as promulgated)." (Al-Qiyamah 18)

﴿ فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَٰهُ فَٱتَّبِعْ قُرْءَانَهُۥ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

In interpretation of it, it is said that it means when Gabriel "peace be upon him" recites it to you. Allah also said: " Fight them, and Allah will punish them by your hands." (At-Tawbah 14)

﴿ قَٰتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

In this Holy Verse, He Almighty ascribed killing to them, i.e. the servants, and punishment to Himself. To be sure, punishment is the same killing as

shown in this clear statement: " It is not you who slew them; it was Allah: when you threw (a handful of dust), it was not your act, but Allah's." (Al-(Anfal 17

﴿وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَمَىٰ﴾

He also said: " He Who taught (the use of) the Pen, Taught man that which he knew not." (Al-Alaq 4-5)

﴿ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَ بِٱلْقَلَمِ ۝ عَلَّمَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝﴾

Then He said on another occasion: "(Allah) Most Gracious! It is He Who has taught the Qur'an... He has taught him speech (and Intelligence)." (Ar-Rahman 1-4)

﴿ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ۝ عَلَّمَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۝ خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ۝ عَلَّمَهُ ٱلْبَيَانَ ۝﴾

Then, He said: " Nay more, it is for Us to explain it (and make it clear)." (Al-Qiyamah 19)

﴿ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُۥ ۝﴾

He said too: " Do you then see? The (human Seed) that you throw out, Is it you who create it, or are We the Creators?" (Al-Waqi'ah 58-59)

﴿أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تُمْنُونَ ۝ ءَأَنتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُۥٓ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْخَٰلِقُونَ ۝﴾

In his description of the angel of womb, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Then, he enters into the womb and takes hold of the dropped sperm and forms it into a human body and then says: "O Lord! Would it be a male or a female? Would it be straight or crooked?" Allah Almighty then says what He likes to say, and the angel creates (in compliance with Allah's order)." According to another version: "Then the angels forms it and breathes into it of the spirit with either happiness or wretchedness." (Al-Bazzar and Ibn Adi on the authority of A'ishah).

Allah Almighty further said in the Holy Qur'an: " Soon will We show them Our Signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth), and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that your Lord does witness all things?" (Fussilat 53)

﴿سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْءَافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۝﴾

In confirmation of that, He said: " There is no god but He: that is the witness of Allah." (Al Imran 18)

﴿شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۝﴾

Allah Almighty described Himself as the giver of life as well as the causer of death, then He authorized two angels to undertake both, one to each. It is narrated that both angels of death and life argued each other. The angel of death said: "It is I who sends the living to death." The angel of life said: "It is I who brings life to the dead." Then, Allah Almighty revealed: "Let each of you engage

in his job and work I have subjugated him to do, and it is I who give life and cause death, and none causes to die or brings to life other than Me."

Overall, the act might be used in different ways, and all are not contradictory once they are understood and comprehended well. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him whom he gave the date: "Take it: Had you not come to take it, it would have come to you." (Ibn Hibban and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Umar). He thus ascribed the act of coming to him as well as to the date, and it is well-known that the date never comes in the very way man comes. Similarly, when the repentant said: "I turn in repentance to Allah Almighty and not to Muhammad "peace be upon him", the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, he has attributed the right to Him Who is more liable to it."

Whoever then ascribes all things to Allah Almighty has indeed known and told the truth, and whoever attributes anything to someone else other than Allah Almighty does so by way of allegory and metaphor. When some of the Arabs expressed this fact, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" confirmed it. It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The truest poetic verse said by a poet is the statement of Labid: "Behold! Everything except for Allah is false; and every kind of blessing is inevitably perishable."

You may argue: "Then, it has seemed clear that man, in his will, power and act, is forced by necessity. Then, what is the significance of reward and punishment, of pleasure and displeasure? And moreover, how could He be displeased with the act He does?" In reply, it should be known to you that we have previously referred to the answer of that question in the Book of Gratitude. So, we need not repeat it now.

That is the extent to which the monotheism summons the state of reliance (on Allah Almighty). This could be achieved only with faith in the mercy and wisdom. Monotheism summons the consideration of the causer of causes, whereas faith in the mercy and its extension summons the confidence of the causer of causes; and anyone could rely but on him of whom he is confident, and his heart is reassured. That is indeed one of the greatest doors of faith.

It is that one should give to trust in which there is neither suspicion nor weakness to the fact that were Allah Almighty to create all the creatures with the mind of the most intelligent among them, and give them of knowledge as much as is given to the most knowledgeable among them, and create for them of knowledge what lies within their capacity to endure, and pours over them of indescribable wisdom, and then increase all of them in knowledge, reason and wisdom as much as the like of what they have, and then reveal to them the consequences of matters, and inform them of the mysteries of the dominion of the invisibles, until they come to know good and evil, benefit and harm, and then He commands them to regulate the affairs of the kingdom of visibles and dominion of invisibles with the help of what He has given them of knowledge, reason and wisdom, by no means would their manipulation, given their co-operation and combination, add, even in the least, to the Allah's manipulation

of the affairs of the world and the hereafter, nor reduce anything from, nor raise nor lower an atom thereof, nor bring a benefit nor avert harm, defect, ailment, poverty, or shortage from him whom Allah has doomed to receive any of those.

On the contrary, they would find neither a flaw nor a shortage of proportion in all of what Allah has created , of the heavens and the earth, if they turn their vision again and again to them; and the same applies to all that is doomed by Allah to His servant concerning sustenance, term appointed, happiness and grief, failure and power, belief and disbelief, obedience and disobedience, etc: all are made with justice and truth in which there is neither injustice nor wrongness. On the contrary: It is made according to the required order and in proportion to what should be, in such a way as there is nothing possible to be better, more perfect, and more complete than what is available. Had there been anything better which He has the power to do but He did not do out of His bounty, it would have been niggardliness that contradicts generosity, and injustice which opposes justice; and had he had no power to do it, it would have been failure that contradicts lordship. That is because every kind of poverty and harm in this world is but a shortage in this world which would be compensated in the hereafter, and every kind of shortage one has in the hereafter is a kind of blessing for another, for had it not been for the night, the value of the day would not have been learnt, and had it not been for the ailment, the healthy would not have enjoyed of their health, and had it not been for the fire (of Hell), the inhabitants of Paradise would not have learnt the value of the favor conferred upon them.

As well as redeeming the souls of mankind with the souls of animals and giving them the authority to slay and slaughter them is not injustice, for it is out of perfect justice to give priority to the complete over the incomplete, similarly, it is out of perfect justice to make much the favor on the inhabitants of the Gardens through the severe punishment of the denizens of the fire of Hell and redeem these of belief with those of disbelief. Had the incomplete not been created, surely, the value of the complete would not have been learnt. Had the animals not been created, of a surety, the honor of mankind would not have appeared. Both completeness and incompleteness appear when compared with each other. Wisdom and generosity require to create both the complete and incomplete. As well as cutting off the hand when eroded to save the soul in the remaining body is out of justice, for it is to redeem a complete with an incomplete, the same applies to the disparity between the people concerning what is doomed to them in this world and the hereafter: All of this is justice in which there is no wrongness, and truth in which there is no sport.

In sum, both good and evil are decreed, and what is decreed should inevitably come after having been preordained by the will. So, there is none to cancel out His judgement, and there is none to change His decision and command. On the contrary, everything, be it significant or insignificant is doomed to happen, and what affected you was not to miss you, and what missed you was not to affect you.

Let us then satisfy ourselves with those hints from the sciences of revelation,

which form the foundations of the station of reliance (on Allah), and rather return to the science of practical religion, Allah willing: sufficient for us is Allah as the best disposer of affairs.

part Two: States and deeds of reliance on allah

It contains the following chapters:
Exposition of state of reliance
Exposition of statements of sheikhs about definition of reliance
Exposition of reliance as to earning for the single and the responsible for his family
Exposition of reliance as to the amount to be saved and the reasons for saving
Exposition of reliance as to averting harm
Exposition of reliance as to removing harm by medical treatment and other things
Allah helps us with His mercy

CHAPTER ONE
EXPOSITION OF STATE OF RELIANCE

We have previously mentioned that the station of reliance consists of knowledge, state and work, and talked about knowledge.

The state is that which describes reliance, whose foundation is knowledge, and fruit is work. The people talked so much in definition of reliance, and their phrases and expressions are different, each according to his own state and experience, as is the custom of the Sufis. So, there is no benefit to make a mention of them here. Let's uncover it directly saying:

Reliance is that the heart deputizes, and depends upon him whom he considers reliable. Suppose a false suitcase is raised against you in the court, you would, of course, deputize one (the lawyer) to uncover the truth and show the falsehood of the claim before the judge. Of a surety, you would not deputize that person and rely on him to undertake the task unless he meets four conditions: the furthest degree of guidance, the furthest degree of power, the furthest degree of eloquence, and the furthest degree of sympathy.

By guidance, he would know the points of falsehood and dissembling, in order that the abstruse tricks would not be hidden from him. By power, he could dare to declare the truth with no hesitation nor flattery nor adulation. It may be that although he knows the points of dissembling in the claim of the foe, his fear or weakness prevents him from declaring it. As for eloquence, it is the verbal power that enables one to express in words all which the heart likes to declare. To be sure, it is not that all who know the points of dissembling are fluently expressive enough to show them in the court. By the furthest degree of sympathy, he would do his best to uncover the truth, for the power alone does not avail without his having care for the mandator.

If he has doubt in all or one of those four, or has the feeling that his foe is more perfect in them, then, he would not be completely reassured to his legal representative. His state of reassurance and reliance then differs according to the

power of his conviction and belief in those four conditions. As the beliefs and convictions differ in power and weakness whose degrees are infinite, similarly, the states of the reliant differ in the power of reassurance and confidence whose degrees are infinite, until he attains the certainty (of faith) in which there is neither weakness nor suspicion. It is like the case in which the legal representative is the father of the mandator who seeks to gather both the lawful and the unlawful to defend his son: in this case, he has certainty only in one condition, i.e. the furthest degree of sympathy and care, and not in all the conditions. The same then applies to any of those four, in which one might attain the certainty of confidence and this is known by long experience and practice, which tell, for example, that so and so is famous for his great eloquence, so and so for his great power and bravery in saying the truth, so and so for his great skill in uncovering the tricks and points of dissembling, etc.

Having known the significance of reliance in this example, you then might measure on it the reliance on Allah Almighty. If it is proven to you, through revelation or decisive belief, that there is no doer or maker but Allah Almighty, as you have previously had complete faith in His knowledge and power to sustain all of His servants, His perfect care, mercy and sympathy for all of His servants, and that there is no further power, nor further knowledge, nor further care, nor further mercy beyond His, then, your heart would rely on Him alone, and would not turn to anyone or anything else, for indeed, there is neither might nor power but with Allah Almighty as has previously been shown in monotheism.

But if you do not have this state in yourself, it might be due to one of two reasons: Either the lack of certainty in one of those four conditions, or the weakness and disease of the heart because of being possessed by illusions and false impressions. However, the heart might be disturbed by illusions without even being short of certainty. If one, for example, is to eat honey, which is likened in front of him to dung, he would surely have aversion for it, and if a rational person is required to spend the night beside a dead in the grave or on the bed, he would disdain the idea, even though he is certain of his being dead and motionless. This is due to the weakness of the heart, from which any man could hardly be free. But it might become strong until it turns into a disease causing one to panic to spend the night alone in the house, given that the door might be tightly closed.

Thus, reliance is suspended on the strength of heart and certainty for by both, the heart becomes calm and reassured. However, there is difference between tranquility and reliance. How many a reliance is, but with no reassurance. Allah Almighty addressed Abraham "peace be upon him" saying: "Do you not then believe?" He said: "Yea! but to reassure my own heart." (Al-Baqarah 260)

﴿ قَالَ أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِن قَالَ بَلَىٰ ﴾

He sought to see with his eyes how life is given to the dead, in order to establish it in his imagination, for the soul always follows and is reassured by imagination, but not by certainty in the beginning until it ultimately attains the degree of the reassured soul. How many a reassured person who has no certainty,

like those of all religions and doctrines other than Islam. The Jew, for instance, is reassured by his Judaism, and the same is true of the Christian, given that both have no certainty, but they follow their assumption and what they souls desire. Although they received the guidance, which is the cause of certainty, from their Lord, they turn away from it.

Cowardice and boldness are among the instincts, with which the certainty alone is of no benefit. They are among the causes which oppose reliance, just as the weakness of certainty of one of all four conditions is another cause. But if there is strong certainty along with control over the instincts, the confidence of Allah Almighty would be attained. It is said that in the Torah, the following phrase is written: "Curse is he whose confidence is in another man like him (more than in Allah)." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever seeks honor and power through servants, Allah Almighty puts him to humiliation." (Al-Aqili and Abu Na'im on the authority of Umar).

Once the significance of reliance is revealed to you, and you come to learn the state which is called reliance, then, you should learn that this state is of three degrees in terms of power and weakness:

The first is what we have previously mentioned, i.e. to be confident of Allah Almighty, and of His care and concern over him as he is his legal representative and disposer of affairs.

The second, which is stronger, is that his state with Allah should be like the child's state with his mother: the child knows none other than his mother, and takes refuge to none other than her when anything terrorizes him, and depends upon none other than her. Once he sees her, he gets attached to the tail of her garment, and if anything disturbs or befalls him, the first word he cries with is: "O mother!" that is because he is fully confident of her mercy, sympathy, care and sufficiency for him. Whoever then devotes himself as such to Allah Almighty, depends as such on Allah Almighty, is confident as such of Allah Almighty, and gets attached as such to Allah Almighty, he then is reliant on Allah Almighty, just as the child is reliant on his mother.

The difference between this and the former is that this is entirely reliant to the extent that he consumes himself in reliance from even the perception of the real nature of his reliance. There is no place in his heart for anything other than Him on Whom he is reliant. But the former relies ostentatiously, without consuming himself from reliance for he turns to it, and perceives it well, with which he is diverted from observation of Him upon Whom he is reliant. To this Sahl referred when he was asked about reliance: "What is its minimum?" he said: "To abandon wishes." It was said to him: "Then, what is its middle?" he said: "To leave the choice", in reference to the second degree. But when he was asked about its maximum, he gave no answer and rather said: "None knows it but he who attains at least its middle."

The third, which is the highest, is to be in the Hands of Allah Almighty in all of his movements and stillness like a dead in the hands of the washer of his body, with no difference except that he sees himself dead moved only by the eternal power in the same way as the dead body is moved by the hand of the washer. It is

he whose certainty is strong of the fact that it is Allah Who causes movement, power, will, knowledge, and all things and attributes, and of the fact that all happen by necessity and force (of Allah), which means that he does not wait what to occur to him. Unlike the child, in the previous degree, who takes refuge to his mother, cries and gets attached to the tail of her garment, he, in this third degree, is like a child who knows, for certain, that even if he does not cry for his mother, she always demands him, even if he does not get attached to the tail of his mother's garment, she always carries him, and even if he does not ask her for milk, she hastens to provide for him. The fruit of this station is to leave supplication and demand out of confidence of Allah's generosity and care, and of the fact that even if he does not ask, he would be given better than what he asks for. But the second station does not require him to leave supplication and demand from him, but it requires him to leave demand from anyone else.

You may argue: "Are those states imaginable?" In reply, let me say that they are not impossible, but they exist in very rare cases. The first station is closer to possibility, whereas both the second and third are more rare and exceptional; and even in case either the second or the third exists, it is unlikely to remain or become regular. We could say that the third station does not come but like the flash which vanishes very soon. But the period of time for which the second station could last is somewhat longer.

you may further ask: "With those states, could the servant have the power to regulate his affairs or get attached to the means and causes?" In reply, it should be known to you that the third state nullifies manipulation entirely as long as it remains. The second station also nullifies manipulation except when one takes refuge to Allah Almighty with supplication and invocation, like the child's manipulation when he gets attached to his mother. The first station does not nullify the origin of manipulation and choice. But it nullifies some manipulations, like one's reliance on his agent or legal representative: he leaves manipulation on the part of anyone else other than the agent, but not that recommended by his agent, or known from the practice and custom to be so. An agent might advise his mandator to be present in the court, since he would not speak but in his presence. In this case, he regulates his affairs to attend, which, anyway, does not contradict his reliance on him, for it is out of his perfect reliance on him to do just what he has planned for him to do, and had he not relied on him and depended on his advice, surely, he would not have attended in response to his counsel.

An example of what is known by practice and custom, is that one knows that he could not argue the foe except from the record. Then, it is out of his perfect reliance is to take the record with him when he goes to argue his foe in the court. In this way, he could not dispense with manipulation either in attendance or in bringing the record with him. Were he to leave any of those, it would be shortage and deficiency in his reliance.

Then, after he attends in response to the advice of his agent, and brings the record with him in compliance with what is known from custom and practice, he sits in the court watching his agent's defense and advocacy, with which he might

rise up to the second and even the third station. He indeed has done everything required from him by his agent, and there remains only his self-reassurance and confidence of the agent, and expectation for what is to come.

Having understood that, all problems and difficulties concerning reliance (on Allah) would be averted from you, and you come to know that it is not requisite for reliance to abandon all manipulations as long as it is not in opposition to reliance as will be shown later in the deeds. If the reliant takes refuge to his strength and power in attendance and bringing the records with him (in the court), it would not contradict reliance, for he knows that had it not been for the presence of the agent, neither his attendance nor his bringing the records in the court would have been useful. He then does not depend on his strength or power because they are his strength or power, in so much as because it is the agent who shows to him that it is of great benefit to depend on them to be able to argue his foe. In this way, there is neither strength nor power but with the agent.

But this last statement is not fitting for the agent (as a human being), for he is not the creator of his strength and power. But he just functions them for the benefit of his mandator. This statement is perfectly true to the real disposer of affairs, i.e. Allah Almighty, for He is the Creator of the strength and power as we have previously clarified in monotheism, and made them effective as being requisite for what He is going to create after them. Then, there is neither strength nor power but with Allah Almighty, in truth and verification. Whoever testifies to this would receive the great reward referred to in the many narrations and traditions, which assure much reward to him who says "There is neither strength nor power but with Allah Almighty." But one may wonder: "How should one be given that much reward only for this statement which is easy on the tongue, and easy on the heart to believe in its concept?"

There is, to be sure, much reward for this statement, even though incomparable to the testimony of monotheism "There is none worthy of worship except for Allah." That is because the testimony of monotheism affirms all things to Allah Almighty, whereas this affirms to Him only two things. On the other hand, we have already mentioned that everything has two husks and two cores, and this applies also to that statement. Most people restricted themselves to the two husks and abandoned the two cores. To this the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred in his saying: "Whoever says "There is none worthy of worship except for Allah" out of truth and faith in them from the depth of his heart, Paradise is assured to him." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Zaid Ibn Arqam; and Abu Ya'li on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

In sum, whoever does not say either of both statements out of sincerity and faith in them, which is based on contemplation and certainty, then, no state of reliance is expected from him.

You may argue: "You have said that whoever says that "There is neither strength nor power but with Allah Almighty" attributes only two things to Allah Almighty. Then, if one says that both the heavens and the earth are created by Allah Almighty, would he receive the same reward he receives when he says "There is neither strength nor power but with Allah Almighty"?.

In reply, let me answer in the negative, for the reward is determined by the amount and value of that for which it is given. There is no equality between both phrases. There is no comparison between the hugeness and immensity of the heavens and the earth on the one hand, and the amount of the strength and power on the other hand. That is because it is not only by hugeness or immensity that things are estimated. Anyone among the laymen knows, for certain, that the heavens and the earth are not created by a human being, but by Allah Almighty. But the matter of the strength and power has been abstruse and problematic on Mu'tazilah, philosophers and many sects of those who claim they reflect opinions and doctrines minutely until they turned into hair-splitters. So, it is a great danger in which the heedless have fallen, affirming to themselves things out of polytheism.

Whoever goes beyond that obstacle by help and aid of Allah Almighty will have a high and great degree. We have previously mentioned that in monotheism, there are only two obstacles: The first is to look at the heavens and the earth, the sun and the moon and stars, clouds and rain, and all non-living beings; and the other is to look at the choice of animals, and this obstacle is greater and more dangerous than the former. But in general, to go beyond those obstacles is to attain the perfect mystery of monotheism. This is why there is much reward for this statement, i.e. for the contemplation of which this statement is a translation.

The state of reliance then is to abandon one's strength and power, and rather rely on the One and Real. This point would be clarified in more detail when we talk about the deeds of reliance, Allah willing.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPOSITION OF THE STATEMENTS OF MANY SHEIKHS ABOUT THE DIFFERENT STATES OF RELIANT

It would be clear to you, from those statements, that nothing thereof is beyond what we have mentioned. But each has indeed expressed his own experience and state.

Abu Musa Ad-Daili said: I asked Abu Yazid about his understanding of reliance, thereupon he asked me: "And what do you say about it?" I said: "Our companions say that even if wild animals exist on your right and left sides, your internal thought would not change even a bit (out of fear of them)." On that he said: "Yes, that is close to its meaning. But if the inhabitants of Paradise are enjoying in their pleasures and the denizens of Hell are punished and burnt in the fire, and you make a distinction between them, then, you would come out of the sphere of the reliant."

What Abu Musa said is a report of one of the most glorious states of reliance, i.e. the third station; whereas what Abu Yazid mentioned is a report of the dearest knowledge of reliance, which is among the foundations of reliance: it is the knowledge of the wisdom of Allah Almighty in the sense that whatever He does should necessarily be done, with no distinction between the inhabitants of Paradise and the denizens of the fire of Hell in relation to the origin of injustice and wisdom. That is indeed the most abstruse kind of knowledge, and beyond it lies directly the mystery of Fate and Divine Decree. Abu Yazid rarely talks but

about the highest stations and the furthest degrees.

Furthermore, it is not requisite in the first station of reliance to take precautions of the female snakes, for Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" himself took precautions in the cave (of Thawr) when he was along with the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" by closing all its holes for fear of their danger. But it might be said that he did so only with his foot, but his internal thought did not change because of them; or that he did so out of sympathy and pity for the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and not himself. But the reliance removes once his internal thought changes for the sake of himself. But it would be shown later that the like of this and even more does not contradict reliance. What stimulates the internal thought to move in flight from the female snakes is fear, and the reliant has the right to fear from the mover and creator of the female snakes, for the female snakes have neither strength nor power but with Allah Almighty. So, if he takes precautions, he should not rely on himself or on his power and manipulation, but on the Creator of the strength, power and planning.

In another context, Dhun-Nun Al-Misri was asked about the concept of reliance thereupon he said: "It is to abandon all lords (other than Allah Almighty), and eliminate all means." The first phrase refers to monotheism, and the last to the works and deeds in this world, but not to the state explicitly in so much as implicitly. It was said to him once again: "Then, give us more." He said: "It is to devote the soul to worship and set it free from lordship" in reference to dissociation only from the strength and power.

Hamdun Al-Qassar was asked about reliance thereupon he said: "If you have ten thousand Dirhams and at the same time you owe a Daniq, you do not feel safe to die and your debt remains due on you; and if you owe ten thousand Dirhams and you do not have what fulfills it, you do not despair that Allah Almighty would fulfill it on your behalf." That is a reference to the great power of Allah Almighty.

Abdullah Al-Qurashi was asked about reliance and he said: "It is to get attached to Allah Almighty in whichever state you are." The asker said to him: "Give me more." He said: "It is to leave each means that leads to another until you reach the Real Who is the guardian of all things." The first is general to all three stations, and the other is particular to the third station only. It is like the reliance of Abraham "peace be upon him" when Gabriel "peace be upon him" asked him: "Do you have a need?" He said: "As for you, it is not." His question was a means leading to another, i.e. Gabriel's guarding him, which Abraham "peace be upon him" left out of confidence of the fact that if Allah likes, He would subjugate Gabriel to do so. That is a state of one who is absent from himself with the presence of Allah Almighty. It occurs very rarely, and even if it exists, it is more unlikely to remain for a long time.

According to Abu Sa'id Al-Kharraz: "Reliance is a quake without tranquility, and a tranquility without quake." Perhaps he refers to the second station. His tranquility without quake refers to the heart's tranquility and reassurance of the disposer of affairs; and his quake without tranquility refers to one's panic to Allah

and supplication and imploring to Him in which he quakes like the child when he quakes in the hands of his mother, with his heart calm and reassured of her complete and perfect pity for him.

According to Abu Ali Ad-Daqqaq: "Reliance is of three degrees: dependence, submission and then authorization. The reliant gets reassured of His promise, and the one who submits satisfies himself with His knowledge, and the one who gives authorization accepts His judgement." This refers to the disparity of degrees of his sight in relation with the one whom he views. Knowledge is the foundation, followed by promise and then by judgement. It is not unlikely that the reliant observes something of that.

Many Sheikhs have a lot of statements other than those we have mentioned concerning reliance. But let us not be lengthy by mentioning all of them, for to uncover the truth of it is more beneficial than to relate the different statements about it. That is due to the state of reliance; and Allah Almighty helps us, with His mercy and kindness, achieve success.

CHAPTER THREE
EXPOSITION OF DEEDS OF RELIANT

It should be known that knowledge develops the state, and the deed is the fruit of the state. It might be thought that reliance is to leave earning with the body, and manipulation with the mind, and rather to lie on the ground like a thrown cloth, or a piece of flesh on bone. But this is, to be sure, the belief of the ignorant among the people, since it is unlawful under Sharia, which praises the reliance. Then, how should a religious station be attained through something forbidden in religion? Let's uncover the truth and say that the effect of reliance appears in the servant's movement and seeking with his knowledge to achieve his purposes. The servant seeks voluntarily either to get something beneficial which he lacks, such as earning, or to save something beneficial which he has, like saving, or to avert harm from him before it afflicts him, like defending himself against a thief, an attacker or a wild animal, or to remove harm that afflicted him, like remedy from diseases and their like. The purposes of the servant's movement do not go beyond those main four: to get a benefit, keep a benefit, avert harm, or prevent harm. Now, let us in the following pages make a mention of the conditions and degrees of reliance in each of those, with evidences from Sharia.

THE FIRST PURPOSE: TO GET A BENEFIT

The means by which a benefit is sought is of three degrees: what is fully certain, what is almost certain, and what is illusive.

The first set of means: what is fully certain, like the association between the cause and effect according to the Divine Decree, in which there is no difference or dispute. Suppose, for instance, that food is served before you and you are very hungry, but you do not stretch your hand to it under pretext that you are reliant, and it is requisite for reliance not to seek, and to stretch the hand is a kind of seeking, and the same applies also to chewing and swallowing the food: this is, to be sure, a mere madness, and does not belong to reliance. If you expect that Allah Almighty would create in you a state of satiation, or create in the food a

power of movement to enable it to come and enter your mouth, or subjugate an angel to chew and swallow it and convey it to your stomach on your behalf, you then are ignorant of the established norm of Allah on earth. Similarly, if you do not cultivate the land, in covet of a plant to be created by Allah without sowing the seed of it, or do not have sexual relation with your wife in covet of her giving birth without it such as Mary gave birth to Jesus "peace be upon him", it is madness, quite far from reliance. Those states and their likes are beyond calculation. In this station, reliance is not only by deed, but by both state and deed.

As far as knowledge is concerned, it is to know, for certain, that it is Allah Almighty Who created for you the food, the hand, the teeth and the power of movement, and that it is He Who feeds and waters you. As for the state, it is that your heart's tranquility and reassurance go back to your depending on Allah Almighty, and not on your hand or food. How should you depend on the health and soundness of your hand which might soon stop from function and be afflicted with paralysis? How should you depend on your power and you might soon lose your consciousness and mind leaving you motionless? How should you depend only on the presence of food, and perhaps Allah might direct somebody to overpower you on it, or cause a female snake to come and disturb you and divert you from it? Since all of those are possible, and there is no way to get rid of them but by virtue of Allah Almighty, you then should rejoice of Him, depend on Him, and put your trust in Him.

The second degree is the means which are almost certain, but the effects more likely result from them, as well as it is unlikely that they would not result from them. A typical case is of him who leaves the homeland and town of residence, and sets out on journey alone having no provision with him, not in the company of the caravans or groups of riders, and follows the lonely deserts and ways which people very rarely walk through. This is not requisite for reliance, for taking provision on journey in the desert is the right way of the early people and righteous successors, and it does not nullify reliance particularly when it comes after depending on the virtue of Allah Almighty. But it is possible, as being one of the highest stations of reliance, and this is why Al-Khawas used to do it.

But you may argue: "This is to seek to put oneself to destruction, which is forbidden under Sharia." In reply, let me say that it does not become unlawful with two conditions: the first is that a man should have disciplined, mortified and habituated his own self to keep patient on hunger for a week or two, without causing breast disturbance or mind distraction, or difficulty to celebrate the praises of Allah Almighty. The other is that he should have the power to sustain himself with such things as grass and its like. After those conditions, it is not unlikely that it would not become unlawful, for he might probably meet, by chance, every week or every two weeks, somebody to provide for him, or come upon a village or a town to get sustenance for himself, and so on. Mortification is the foundation of reliance.

This was the conduct of Al-Khawas and his fellows from among the reliant. Al-Khawas did not leave the needle, rope, file and jug, saying: "This does not

oppose reliance." The reason is that he learnt that in the desert, there is no water on the surface of the earth, and it is not out of the established norm of Allah that water rises up automatically from the bottom to the top without a jug or a rope, and it is unlikely that one could find a rope or a jug in the desert, and one needs water to perform ablution many times thereof everyday, and to quench his thirst at least once every two days, for the traveler could not, with movement in the scorching heat, keep patient on the loss of water in the same way as he could on the loss of food. Similarly, he might have only one garment which is apt to be torn leaving his private parts exposed, and in the desert, he could unlikely find a needle or a file, and this is why he takes them with him. Thus, anything like those four join the second degree, for it is thought but not with full certainty, that his garment might probably be torn, and that one might probably give him another garment, or that he could probably find on the top of the will a man to give him water, and so on.

For this reason, we say that if one inclines to a mountain pass in which there is neither water, nor grass, nor anyone to come to it at all, and sits there reliant (on Allah), he would be sinful, seeking to destroy himself. it is narrated that an ascetic left his residence and betook himself to the bottom of a mountain and stayed there seven days saying: "I would never ask anyone about anything until my Lord brings me my sustenance." He spent seven days there until he was about to die, and no sustenance was brought to him. On that he said: "O my Lord! If you have decreed that I should live, then, bring me my sustenance You have doomed to me, otherwise, take my soul unto You." Allah Almighty revealed to him: "By My Honor, I would not sustain you until you enter your residence and live among the people." He entered his residence and sat thereupon much food and drink was brought to him by the people. He ate and drank, and had doubt within himself about that. On that Allah Almighty revealed to him: "You liked to remove My wisdom with your abstinence from this world. Do you not learn that to sustain My servant at the hands of My other servants is dearer to Me than to sustain him with the hand of My power?"

Then, to leave all means whatsoever is an opposition to the wisdom of Allah, and an ignorance of the established way of Allah Almighty. But to act upon the established way of Allah Almighty, and depend on Him Alone and not on the means does not contradict reliance in the least. But means are divided into apparent and hidden; and the significance of reliance is to be satisfied with the hidden on the exclusion of the apparent means, with the soul's tranquility and reassurance of the causer of the cause, and not of the cause itself.

You may ask: "What is your opinion about sitting in residence without earning? Is it forbidden, permissible or recommended?" in reply, it should be known to you that it is not forbidden for it is like the act of him who tours in the desert which does not lead to his destruction. The resident does not destroy himself whatsoever in order for his act to be regarded unlawful. It is not unlikely that sustenance might come to him from sources he expects not, but, at the same time, it might delay, and patience here is possible. But if he closes the gate of his

door on himself and there is no way for anyone to reach him, then, his act would be unlawful. If he opens the door of his home, and he is not engaged in worship or celebration of Allah, then, work to get his earnings would be better for him. But anyway his act is not unlawful unless he is about to die, at which time it becomes incumbent upon him to come out and earn his living or beg the people for sustenance. But if his heart is entirely devoted to Allah Almighty, and not ambitious for anyone to enter from the door and bring sustenance to him, in so much as it is ambitious for the bounty of Allah Almighty, then, this would be much better and preferable, as being one of the stations of reliance. It is to engage in Allah Almighty and give no care to his sustenance. That is because sustenance should inevitably come to him.

At that point, it is of great significance the statement of a religious scholar: "If a servant even flees away from his sustenance, it would run after him in pursuit of him, just as if he flees away from death, it would run after him in pursuit of him; and if he asks Allah Almighty not to sustain him, He would not respond to him, and by such asking, he would be regarded sinful, and Allah would say to him in reply to his demand: "O ignorant! How should I create you and not sustain you?" for this reason, Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" said: "The people dispute about all things except for sustenance and death, for they assume the consensus that there is neither sustainer nor causer of death but Allah Almighty." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If you rely on Allah Almighty as it should be, surely, He would sustain you in the same way as He sustains the birds: they come out hungry early in the morning, and return satiated in the evening, and rather the mountains would disappear with your supplication."

Jesus "peace be upon him" said: "Look at birds which neither cultivate, nor harvest, nor save anything, but at the same time, Allah Almighty sustains them day by day. But if you say that your bellies are bigger, then, look at the cattle and sheep, and how Allah Almighty assigned to them those meadows for sustenance." According to Abu Ya'qub As-Susi: "The reliant have their sustenance at the hands of the servants with no effort nor suffering, and those other than them are engaged in work and toiling." Another one said: "All servants are sustained by Allah Almighty. But some of them eat with humiliation like the beggars, some with trouble and expectation like the traders, some with their profession like the craftsmen, and some with honor like the Sufis, who witness the One Exalted in honor and get their sustenance from His Hand, and see no intermediary.

The third degree pertains to the illusive means, falsely thought to lead to the effects, but with no apparent confidence or certainty. A typical case is of him who surveys the minute and detailed manipulations as regards the matter of earning, by which he turns entirely from the sphere of reliance. That is the case of almost all the people, i.e. those who use the minute tricks to earn permissible property. But to earn what is suspicious, or to use suspicious tricks in earning is to be concerned over this world, and rely on the causes. It is not hidden that this nullifies reliance entirely. It is like the causes to be attributed to bringing about what is beneficial, and removing what is harmful. The Messenger of Allah

"Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" described the reliant as those who do not depend on those causes, and did not describe them as those who do neither earn, nor live in the cities and towns, nor take anything from anyone. Sahl said about reliance: "It is to leave manipulation at all." In justification of that he said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty created the creatures and did not veil them from Himself, but their veil is their own planning." Perhaps he meant the extraction of the far reasons through the thought, which need manipulation, other than the near reasons.

In sum, it has become clear that the reasons are divided into those the attachment to which turns one from the sphere of reliance entirely, and those which do not do; and those the attachment to which turns one from the sphere of reliance are divided into what is decisively certain and what is only assumed; and those decisively certain do not turn one from the sphere of reliance when the state and knowledge of reliance are available, i.e. to rely on the causer of all causes, in which case, reliance is by state and knowledge, and not by deed, unlike the assumed causes, in which reliance is by state, knowledge and deed.

Furthermore, the reliant are of three stations: The first is that of Al-Khawas and his fellows: it applies to him who tours in the desert with no provision out of confidence of the bounty and favor of Allah Almighty, to help him keep patient for one or two weeks, to facilitate grass or sustenance to him whatsoever, or to keep him firm on satisfaction with death on that state if nothing of those is available. Whoever carries provision could lose it, and whoever has a camel, his camel might be lost, leaving him die out of hunger.

The second station is about him who sits in his house or in the mosque, but within the borders of villages and populous cities. Although it is weaker than the first, one is also reliant, for he leaves earning and all apparent means, and rather relies on the bounty of Allah Almighty in manipulation of his affairs concerning the hidden means. But at the same time, by his residence in the cities and villages, he is exposed to the means of sustenance. But anyway, this does not nullify his reliance if he keeps his eye on Him Who subjugates to him the inhabitants of the town to give him sustenance, and not on the inhabitants of the town themselves, who are imagined to be heedless of him and waste him, and forget him had it not been for the bounty of Allah Almighty.

The third station is about him who comes out and seeks to get his earnings in the same way we have previously mentioned in the third and fourth chapters of the Book of the Etiquettes of earning. This seeking does not turn him from the sphere of reliance so long as his self-reassurance is not of his sufficiency, power, majesty and goods which might be removed by Allah Almighty in a moment: on the contrary, he is reassured only of the sole guarantor and surety to guard all of this for him, and facilitate its reasons and causes to him. On the other hand, if he seeks to earn to spend on his dependents or on the needy and indigent, then, he seeks with his body, while devoting his heart wholeheartedly to Allah Almighty. In this case, his state is more noble than the state of him who sits at home or in the mosque.

The evidence for the fact that seeking to get earnings does not turn one from

the sphere of reliance if its conditions and requirements are fulfilled, and both its state and knowledge are put in consideration, is taken from the conduct of Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" that in the morning next to his being given the pledge of allegiance as the caliph, he took garments and entered the market and started to practice traffic. The Muslims did not like that and said to him: "How do you do so given that you have been made as the successor of the Prophet?" on that he said: "Engage me not from my dependents, for were I to waste them, I would waste those other than them." They then assigned to him the sustenance of a Muslim family from the Muslim treasury. When they were pleased with that, he saw it better to engage in looking after their affairs, helping them, disposing of their interests and serving their benefits and purposes.

It is impossible to say that Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him", in this state, was not in the station of reliance, for which of people is more worthy of that station than him? He indeed was reliant not from the perspective of leaving earning and seeking in so much as from the perspective of giving no care to his power and sufficiency, and the knowledge that Allah Almighty is the facilitator of earning and the disposer of affairs, and observation of many conditions in earning, i.e. to earn only what he needed, without saving or being pompous, or giving preference to his own Dirham over the Dirham of the others, and so on, for whoever enters the market with his Dirham dearer to him than the Dirham of others, he would be concerned over this world and not abstinent from it; and reliance is not valid in the absence of abstinence from this world, given that asceticism alone is valid, for the station of reliance is beyond that of asceticism.

According to Abu Ja'far Al-Haddad, the mister of Al-Junaid: "I have hidden reliance for twenty years, during which I used to enter the market, and everyday I earned a Dinar, from which I did not save or let a single Daniq until the night with me, for before the night, I would have given it out entirely." Al-Junaid used not to talk about reliance in his presence, saying: "I feel shy of talking about his station while he is attendant with me."

You may ask: "Which is better: to sit at home or come out to get his earnings?" in reply, it should be known to you that if one sits at home in order to devote himself entirely to worship, celebration of Allah Almighty, and meditation of the signs and creation of Allah Almighty, etc, and his coming out to work would distract his devotion and divert him from his celebration, then, it would be better for him to sit at home, provided that he should not look forward to the people in expectation for him who might enter into him bringing to him sustenance: on the contrary, he should be of strong heart, reliant on Allah Alone. But if he is of troubled heart, and desires for the people, then, coming out to get earnings would be better for him, because desire for the people is begging with the heart, and to leave it is more important and more significant than to leave earning.

It was the habit of the reliant among the people not to take what their souls desired for. In this context, it is narrated that Ahmad Ibn Hanbal told Abu Bakr Al-Marwazi to give a poor something extra than his charge for which he had hired him, but he rejected to accept it. When he turned away, Ahmad told Abu

Bakr to catch him and give him, for at that time he would accept it. He caught him and gave it to him, and he took it. When Abu Bakr asked Ahmad about that he said: "His soul desired for it at first, and when he turned away, he despaired and had no covet, thereupon he accepted it."

It was the habit of Al-Khawas that whenever he looked at a gift to be given to him, or feared he might get accustomed to the like of that, he would not accept it. When he was asked about the most wonderful thing he saw in his journeys, Al-Khawas said: "I saw Al-Khadir and he accepted my company, and, fearing my soul would be accustomed to and get comforted with that, which might be a shortage of my reliance, I left him."

Overall, if the seeker to earn his living observes the conditions and etiquettes of earning as we have previously clarified them, i.e. not to intend to gather much money, nor depend on his commodities and sufficiency, he would be reliant.

You may ask: "What is the sign indicative of his non-reliance on his commodities and sufficiency?" in reply, let me say that if his goods are stolen or lost, or if he is exposed to any obstacle in his traffic, he would be well-pleased with it, for the reliance of his heart would remain the same before and after that event.

You may argue: "Then, how should it be imagined that one has commodities on which he does not rely, given that he knows for certain that there is no earning without commodities?" in reply, let me say that he should know that those whom Allah Almighty provides with sustenance are numerous, and those whose goods and commodities were lost or stolen are also numerous, and further habituate himself to the fact that Allah Almighty does with him only what serves his benefit and interest. If He ruined his commodities, it would be rendered good for him, for perhaps were He to leave him, it might have led to the corruption of his religion. And even if the result is that he would die out of hunger, he should know, for certain, that to die out of hunger is better for him in the hereafter, so long as it is the fate and decree of Allah Almighty, with no shortage nor indulgence on his part.

If he believes in the truthfulness of all of that, the presence or absence of the commodities would be the same to him. According to a certain narration: "A servant might intend by night to do a thing concerning his traffic, and were he to do it, it would lead him to destruction, but Allah Almighty looks at him from above His Throne (of Majesty), and diverts him from it, leaving him in a state of grief and sorrow, although it is not but a mercy with which Allah Almighty delivers him."

It is within this context that Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I do not mind whether I become rich or poor, for I do not know which is better for me." Whoever is not fully certain of those things, no reliance is expected from him. Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said to Ahmad Ibn Abu Al-Hawari: "I have a share from every station except that of blessed reliance, whose smell I have never smelt." This was his speech given his high esteem and piety. He did not reject that it is among the possible stations, but he reported that he did not attain it.

Furthermore, unless one has a full belief in the fact that there is no doer, no maker, no sustainer and no creator other than Allah Almighty, and that everything doomed by Him to the servant, in terms of poverty and richness, health and sickness, death and life, etc, is, to be sure, for the benefit of that servant than it is hoped by him, then, his state of reliance would not be complete; and the same applies to all stations of religion, all of which are built on the basis of the origin of faith.

In sum, reliance is an understandable station, but it summons the power of the heart and the power of faith and certainty. For this reason, Sahl said: "Whoever criticizes the seeking to get earnings has indeed criticized the sunnah; and whoever criticizes leaving it has indeed criticized monotheism."

You may ask: "Is there any beneficial medicine to treat the heart's being diverted from reliance on the apparent means, in order to have a good assumption of Allah Almighty to facilitate the hidden means?" In reply, let me answer in the affirmative. It is to know, for certain, that the bad assumption is inspired from Satan, and the good assumption is inspired from Allah Almighty. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " Satan threatens you with poverty and bids you to conduct unseemly. Allah promises you His forgiveness and bounties. And Allah cares for all and He knows all things." (Al-Baqarah 268)

﴿ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱلْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٨﴾ ﴾

Man, by nature, is concerned with the Satan's threats. If you add to that the weakness of the heart and cowardice, and seeing the reliant dependent on the apparent means, the evil assumption is intensified, which nullifies reliance.

However, seeing sustenance among the hidden means also nullifies reliance. It is related that a worshipper stayed in the mosque in seclusion, and he had no earnings. The imam said to him: "If you seek to get your earnings, it would be better for you." He gave no answer and the imam repeated the same thrice, and in the fourth time, he answered: "A Jew living near the mosque promises to give me two loafs everyday." He said: "If he is true to his promise, then, your stay in seclusion in the mosque would be better for you." He said: "O man! How are you an imam standing in front of Allah given that shortage of monotheism? How do you give preference to the promise of a Jew over Allah's guarantee of sustenance?" A mosque imam asked one of the praying persons: "From where do you eat?" he said: "O sheikh! Wait until I repeat the prayer I have offered behind you and then I would give you the answer."

It is beneficial for the good assumption of Allah's providing with sustenance out of His bounty through the hidden means to listen to the narrations which imply the wonders of Allah's making in having the sustenance reach him to whom it is doomed. They also contain Allah's power of destroying the wealth of the traders and rich and killing them out of hunger.

It is narrated on the authority of Hudhaifah Al-Mar'ashi, who served Ibrahim Ibn Adham for a long time, thereupon he was asked: "What is the most amazing thing you have seen from him?" he said: "We spent many days on the way to Mecca, with no food we had. Then, we entered Kufah and came into a waste

mosque, thereupon Ibrahim looked at me and said: "O Hudhaifah! I feel you are hungry." I said: "It is as the sheikh feels." He asked me to bring to him an ink and a parchment, and I brought them to him and he wrote the following: "In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. You are the One aimed at in any state, and referred to with all meanings." He also wrote many poetic verses. Then he gave me the parchment and said: "Come out and let not your heart attached to anyone other than Allah Almighty, and give the parchment to the first of people you meet." I came out and gave the parchment to the first man I met, and he was a man riding a mule, and when he took and read it, he wept and said: "What is the matter with the writer of this parchment?" I said to him: "He is in such and such mosque." He gave me a parcel containing six hundred Dinars. Then, I met another one whom I asked about the rider of the mule, thereupon he told me that he was a Christian. I then returned to Ibrahim and related to him the story, thereupon he said to me: "Do not touch the money, for the man would come an hour later." When an hour elapsed, the Christian came in and turned over the head of Ibrahim and went on kissing it and then embraced Islam."

In another context, Abu Ya'qub Al-Aqta Al-Basri said: "I spent ten days in the sanctuary, and I felt weakness out of hunger, thereupon I talked to myself to come out. I came out to the valley perchance I could find anything to pacify my hunger. I saw a taro thrown on the ground and when I took it, I felt I disgusted it, as if somebody saying to me: "You have kept hungry for ten days after which you would break your hunger with that putrefied taro?" I then threw it away, and entered the mosque and sat there. Behold! A non-Arab man came and sat in front of me and put before me a huge container of food and said to me: "This is for you." I asked him: "Then, how have you specified it to me?" He said: "It should be known to you that ten days ago we were aboard the sea and the ship was about to drown, thereupon I vowed that if Allah delivered me from this affliction, I would give this in charity to the first man my eye would fall upon from among those living near the mosque; and you are the first one I have met." I asked him to open it and he did accordingly, and behold! It had semolina, almond and sugar. I took a handful of each, and then said to him: "Give the remaining to your companions as a gift from me to you, and I have accepted it." Then, I said to myself: "Your sustenance is proceeding to you ten days ago and you came out to pursue it from the valley!"

Mimshad Ad-Dainuri said: "I was owing some money, because of which my heart was engaged. Then, I saw in my dream as if somebody saying to me: "O niggard! You blamed Us for that little amount of debt. Take what you like. It is your duty to take, and Our duty to give." After that, I have never accounted a grocer, a butcher, or anyone else."

It is related from Bannan Al-Hammal that he said: "I was on the way to Mecca, coming from Egypt, and I had my provision when a woman came to me and said: "O Bannan! You are carrying provision on your back, and having the false impression that you are not given sustenance." On that I threw away my provision and three days came upon me without eating anything. Then, I found a bangle on the road, and I said to myself: "Let me keep it for perhaps its owner

might come to ask about it, and give me something for returning it to him." Then, the same woman came to me and said: "You are a trader, saying: 'Perhaps its owner might come and I take something from him for returning it to him.'" Then, she threw some Dirhams to me and told me to spend it, and I was satisfied with it along the way to Mecca."

It is related also from him that he needed a slave-girl to serve him. He complained to his companions who collected her price from themselves and sat in expectation for the caravan to buy her. When the caravan came, they chose one to buy and said: "She befits him." They asked its owner about her price and he said: "She is not for sale." When they insisted he said: "She is for Bannan Al-Hammal, presented to him by a woman from Samarqand." She then was brought to Bannan, and the story was related to him.

It is narrated from a man in the early age that he was on journey having a loaf with him. He said to himself: "If I eat it, I would die." On that Allah Almighty entrusted him to an angel who said: "O Lord! if he eats it, then, provide him with sustenance, and if he does not eat it, do not provide him with sustenance." The loaf remained with him until he died, and nothing was given to him other than it.

Abu Sa'id Al-Kharraz said: "I entered the desert without provision and I was exposed to a severe starvation. When I saw the coming town from afar, I rejoiced thinking I had arrived. But later, I thought that I relied on something other than Allah Almighty, thereupon I insisted not to enter the village but as carried to it. I made a hole for myself in the sand and interred my body to the breast, and by night I heard a loud voice saying: "O people of the village! There is an ally of Allah Almighty, detaining himself in a hole in the sand. So, deliver him." A group of people came and took me out, and carried me to the village."

It is further narrated that a man stuck to the gate of the house of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" and behold, he heard somebody saying to him: "O man! Have you emigrated to Umar or to Allah Almighty? Go and learn the Qur'an, for it would make you independent from the gate of the house of Umar." The man went and remained absent until Umar "Allah be pleased with him" missed him. Behold! He got isolated and devoted himself to worship. Umar went to him and asked him: "I have longing for you. What has engaged you from me?" the man said: "I indeed recited and learnt the Qur'an, which made me independent from Umar and the family of Umar." On that Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "May Allah bestow mercy upon you! What have you found in it?" He said: "I have found in it the statement of Allah Almighty: " And in heaven is your Sustenance, as (also) that which you are promised." (Adh-Dhariyat 22)

﴿ وَفِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

I then said to myself: "How should my sustenance be in the heaven and I seek for it on earth?" Umar "Allah be pleased with him" wept and said to him: "You have told the truth." After that, Umar "Allah be pleased with him" used to come and sit with him.

Abu Hamzah Al-Khurasani said: "I performed Hajj one year, and while I was on the way, I fell down into a well. My self disputed me to seek relief of the

people, but I said to myself: "No, by Allah, I would never seek the people's relief." No sooner had I finished from that idea than two men came upon the head of the well. One of them said to the other: "Come to close the head of that well, in order for none to fall in it." They then closed it and I intended to cry, but I said to myself: "But to whom should I cry? He is nearer to me than them." I then relied on Him. An hour later, somebody came and uncovered the head of the well, and dangled his foot as if he was murmuring: "Hang yourself to me." I then hung to his foot and he took me out. Behold! It was a wild animal. It then left, and later on, I heard a voice saying to me: "O Abu Hamzah! Is it better? We have delivered you from damage with damage.""

Such stories are very numerous. If there is a strong faith in it, in addition to the power to keep patient on hunger for a week, with belief that if one's sustenance is not brought to him for a week, then, death would be better to him in the sight of Allah Almighty, and this is why He detained it from him, the reliance would be attained, otherwise, there would be no reliance.

Exposition Of Reliance As To Earning For The Single And The Responsible For His Family

It should be known to you that the responsible for a family differs in the ruling of reliance from him who is single. That is because the reliance of the latter is valid only with two conditions: the first is to have power to keep patient on hunger for a week, without being disturbed or covetous; and the other is some items of faith we have previously mentioned in their suitable places, including his being pleased with death if he receives no sustenance, putting in mind that his sustenance that is doomed to him is death and hunger, on the basis of the belief that if it is shortage in the world, it would be recompensed in the form of increase in the hereafter. In this way, he sees that the best of both kinds of sustenance is driven to him, i.e. the sustenance of the hereafter. Thus, the reliance of a single could be attained.

Furthermore, it is impermissible to oblige the children or dependents in general to keep patient on or endure hunger. They could not be convinced to have faith in monotheism on the basis of the fact that death out of hunger is their sustenance that is doomed to them, with which they should be pleased; and the same applies to the remaining items of faith. For this reason, the responsible for a family could not adhere but to the reliance of the earning, i.e. the third station, which is similar to the reliance of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" when he came out to get his earnings. But to go to desert and leave the children with no sustenance out of reliance, or to sit at home and fail to take care of their affairs out of reliance, is unlawful, which might lead to their destruction, for which he would be reckoned.

In verification, there is no difference between himself and his dependents. If his dependents help them keep patient on hunger for some time, and regard death out of hunger a kind of sustenance and gain in the hereafter, he then has the right to rely concerning them, with good pleasure and satisfaction. But he has no right to waste them by reliance unless they help him keep on hunger for some time. If he could not endure it, and his heart would be troubled, and his worship

distracted, then, it would be impermissible to do it.

In this context, it is narrated from Abu Turab An-Nakhshi that once he saw a Sufi stretching his hand towards a watermelon's husk to eat after three days (of patience), thereupon he said to him: "Sufism is unfitting for you. Stick to the market." He means that there is no Sufism in the absence of reliance; and reliance is valid only for him who could patient on the loss of food for more than three days.

According to Abu Ali Ar-Ruthbari: "If a poor says after five days (of patience on hunger) that he is hungry, then, make him stick to the market, and enjoin upon him to work and get his earnings."

One's body then is like his dependents, and his reliance concerning it and what might harm it is like his reliance concerning them and what might befall them. But he differs from them in one thing, i.e. he has the right to oblige his own self to keep patient on hunger, a right which he does not have concerning his children.

It then has become clear to you that reliance is not to cut off all means in so much as to depend on keeping patient on hunger, and good pleasure with death if sustenance delays to come. Besides, it is to stick to cities and villages, or deserts which contain grass. All of those form the means of survival, but with a kind of harm, for it could not be tolerable without patience. Moreover, reliance in cities and villages is closer to means than in the desert. Although all of those are means, the people incline to means more apparent, due to their weak faith, severe adherence to this world, lacking patience on the harm in this world for the sake of the hereafter, and cowardice that is based on their bad assumption and long hope.

Whoever catches a glimpse of the dominion of the heavens and the earth, it would be revealed to him, in verification, that Allah Almighty has regulated the kingdom of visibles and dominion of invisibles, in such a way that by no means would a servant's sustenance escape him, even if he leaves movement. The one failing to move, his sustenance would never skip him. Do you not see how the fetus in his mother's womb, being failing to move, has his umbilicus connected to his mother's belly in order for nourishment to reach him without his movement to it? Then, when it is disconnected, He invests love and sympathy with authority over the heart of the mother in order to take care of him, and look after his affairs, willingly or unwillingly, as she is compelled by Allah Almighty to do so, by virtue of the fire of love and pity He kindles in her heart. Then, as he has no teeth to chew food, his sustenance is made of milk which needs not to be chewed. Do all of this occur by the effort of the children or of the mother? When he grows up and becomes mature, means of learning and education are made easy for him, in order for him to follow the path to the hereafter.

His cowardice then after maturity is evident ignorance, for his means of living do not decrease by his maturity: On the contrary, they increase. When he was a child, he was unable to earn; and now, he is able to work and get his earnings. Furthermore, when he was a child, only one, his mother, or two, his parents, had

sympathy and pity for him, and their sympathy was excessive as they used to feed him twice or more a day, by virtue of the love and pity placed in their hearts by Allah Almighty; and now when he is mature, pity, mercy and sympathy for him is placed by Allah Almighty in the hearts of all Muslims to the extent that if anyone of them feels somebody is in need, he would sympathize for him, and be stimulated to remove his need. Those who had pity for him in the beginning were one or two, and now they increase up to one thousand or more. They did not sympathize for him at first for they saw him in the care of his parents or guardians, and had they seen him as an orphan, surely, they would have sympathized for him and taken him in their care.

In sum, Allah Almighty is the caretaker of him, as well as of all the people, by means of the pity and mercy He creates in the hearts of His servants. So, why should he engage his heart in the sources of his sustenance after maturity, given that he did not do before it? Paradoxically, during childhood, those who showed mercy to him were only one or two at maximum, and now after attaining maturity, he came to have many. Although the mother's pity is strong, the pity of one thousand or more could serve the purpose. How many an orphan whose state Allah Almighty made better than numerous who have fathers and mothers!

But even, you may argue: "But the people take care of the orphan because they see him unable and incapable because of his orphanhood, whereas they do not turn to the normal person for they see he is able to work and get his earnings, saying: 'He is one like us, so, let him work and endeavor by himself.'" in reply, let me say that if such a capable mature person is an idle, then, they have told the truth, for earning is due on him, and there is no significance for reliance on his part, for reliance is one of the religious stations whose aid one seeks to devote himself to the worship and celebration of Allah Almighty, and what is the matter of the idle with reliance? But if he is devoted to Allah Almighty, sticking to a mosque or a place of worship, in the course of acquiring knowledge and worship, by no means would the people blame him for leaving work for the sake of getting earnings, nor oblige him to do so. On the contrary, his devotion to Allah Almighty instills his love in their hearts and moves them to give him even what is beyond his sufficiency. All he has to do is not to close his door in their face, nor to flee away from them to a mountain pass or desert. Until now, neither a worshipper nor a religious scholar living in a town or a village who devoted himself entirely to Allah Almighty was reported to have died out of hunger. That is because whoever devotes himself to Allah Almighty, Allah never leaves him; and whoever engages in the celebration of Allah Almighty, Allah instills his love in the people's hearts, and subjugates hearts to serve him in the same way as He subjugates the mother's heart to her child.

Indeed, Allah Almighty has regulated the kingdom of visibles and dominion of invisibles in such a way as is sufficient and fitting for their inhabitants. If anyone witnesses His manipulation, surely, he would have full confidence of, engage and believe in the regulator, and further consider the regulator of means and not the means themselves. He has made the means in such a way as everyone

should receive not only as much as is equal to his needs, but also as much as what is beyond his needs. So, there is no point for leaving reliance except the people's desire for permanent pleasure and constant delight. But this is not the path to the hereafter. That is not available for anyone either without or with movement more often. It occurs very rarely. So, none should be reassured of his movement in so much as of the regulator of the kingdom of visibles and dominion of invisibles, in such a way as no sustenance doomed to a servant should escape him even in the least.

If this reality is revealed with certainty to you, along with a strength in the heart and bravery in the soul, then, the fruit would be the same as stated by Al-Hassan Al-Basri: "Would that the inhabitants of Basra entirely are among my dependents, and that a single fruit is as much as a Dinar." According to Wuhaib Ibn Al-Wurd: "Were the heavens to be of copper, and the earth of lead, and were I to be concerned over my sustenance, surely, I would think I have ascribed partners to Allah Almighty."

Having understood all those things, you would learn that reliance is an understandable and attainable station, but only to him who oppresses himself, and that whoever rejects the origin of reliance has done so out of ignorance. So, beware of combining both kinds of bankruptcy: Denial of reliance in taste and sense, and rejection of reliance in faith and belief. You also have to be satisfied with the little provision and pleased with the sustenance whatsoever for it would inevitably come to you, even if you run away from it. At that point, it is incumbent upon Allah Almighty to send your sustenance to you at the hands of him whom you expect not. If you engage in piety and righteousness, you would necessarily witness with experience the confirmation of His statement: " And for those who fear Allah, He (ever) prepares a way out, And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine. And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is (Allah) for him. For Allah will surely accomplish His purpose: verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion." (At-Talaq 2-3)

﴿ مَن كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۚ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

But He does not ensure to sustain him with the flesh of birds and all delicious kinds of food all the time: He does not ensure to provide him but with the sustenance that is sufficient for his survival. This ensured sustenance is given to him who engages in the ensurer and is reassured to His guarantee. The hidden means with which the manipulation of Allah Almighty encompassed sustenance are much greater than what seems to the people. Moreover, the sustenance's gateways and channels are beyond calculation and measure. That is because it emerges on earth, while its means are in the heaven. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " And in heaven is your Sustenance, as (also) that which you are promised." (Adh-Dhariyat 22)

﴿ وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

To be sure, the mysteries of the heavens are beyond the reach of anyone.

For this reason, a group of people entered upon Al-Junaid and he asked them: "What do you want?" they said: "We want sustenance." On that he said: "Then, if you know where it lies, then demand it from wherever it is." They said: "Then, let's ask Allah Almighty." He said: "If you know that He forgets you, then, remind Him of you." They said: "Then, let's enter the house and rely on Him and wait what it would come to be." He said: "But reliance on the basis of experiment (and not on the basis of certainty) is suspicion." They said: "Then, what should we do?" he said: "Do nothing."

Ahmad Ibn Isa Al-Kharraz said: "I was in the desert when severe hunger afflicted me and my self overpowered me to ask Allah Almighty for food, but I said to myself: "But this is not one of the acts of the reliant." Then, it required me to ask Allah Almighty for the power of endurance, but I heard somebody inspiring to me not to do.

You then have come to understand that he, of submissive soul, strong heart, and powerful faith in the manipulation of Allah Almighty, would be always self-reassured of Allah Almighty, fully confident of Him. The worst of his states is to die out of hunger, and of a surety, death should inevitably approach him as it approaches him who is not self-reassured. The perfect reliance then is achieved by full satisfaction on the part of one side, and fulfillment of the ensured sustenance on the part of the other side. The One Who ensures the sustenance of the servants who are satisfied with the means He manipulated is true to His promise. So, all you have to do is to be satisfied and put yourself to experiment, perchance you would witness with certainty and verification the truthfulness of the promise in the form of the wonderful and amazing sustenance you would receive from sources you expect not. Furthermore, expect not, in your reliance, the means but rather the causer and bringer of those means. That is the necessary condition of reliance of him who tours the desert with no provision, or sits at home as idle.

As for him who is famous for his celebration and worship of Allah Almighty, if he is satisfied with food and drink once per day and night, and a coarse garment which befits the men of religion, this would come to him not only from sources he does or does not expect, but also he would receive many times the like of it. This is why his leaving reliance and rather engagement in sustenance indicate to the utmost degree of weakness and shortage. The concern with sustenance is ugly, and it is more ugly on the part of the religious scholars, for it is requisite for a religious scholar to be satisfied and well pleased. To be sure, the satisfied scholar receives his sustenance and the sustenance of his group, unless he dislikes to take from the hands of people and prefers to eat of his own labour: that is fitting for the working scholar, who acts upon work and knowledge outwardly and not inwardly, for work and earning prevent one from inward meditation and contemplation. But the one who engages in worship and knowledge, outwardly and inwardly, and takes from the hand of him who comes close to Allah Almighty with what he gives him is preferable, for by so doing, he devotes himself to Allah on the one hand, and helps another to receive reward for what he gives on the other hand.

Furthermore, whoever contemplates the established norms of Allah Almighty, would know that sustenance is not in proportion to the means. For this reason, one of the Khosraus asked a wise man about the foolish who is given sustenance, and the rational who is deprived of it, thereupon he said: "The Maker likes to indicate to Himself: were He to provide with sustenance every rational, and deprive of sustenance every foolish, it would be thought that it is the mind which provides with sustenance its owner. But when they saw the opposite of that, they believed, with certainty, that the sole sustainer is someone else, and thus lost confidence of the apparent means."

Exposition Of States Of Reliant In Attachment To Sustenance Through A Similitude

It should be known to you that the similitude of the people in relation with Allah Almighty is like the similitude of a group of beggars standing in a field at the gate of the king's palace, in need of food. He brought out to them some of His servants with loafs of bread, and told them to give some two each, and some one each, and so on, and do their best not to forget anyone of them. He ordered a caller to announce to them: "Be quiet, and attach not to anyone of my servants once they come out to you. But anyone of you should be reassured while being firm in his place, for the servants are subjugated and commanded to convey sustenance to all of you. Whoever of you attaches to anyone of my servants and harms him and takes two loafs by force, then, when the gate of the field is opened and he comes out, I would send one of my servants to whom I would entrust him until I punish him in a term appointed by Me, unknown to anyone of you; and whoever does not harm the servants, and is satisfied with only one loaf he receives from the hand of the servant while being quiet and calm, then, I would favor him with a valuable gift in the appointed term at which I would punish the former; and whoever keeps firm in his place and receives two loafs, then, he would receive neither a punishment nor a gift; and whomever my servants miss and give him nothing with the result that he spends the night hungry, without being displeased with the servants, then, in the morrow, I would make him a minister and authorize the affairs of my kingdom to him."

Thus, the beggars were divided into four divisions: a group were overpowered by their appetite, thereupon they gave no care to the promised punishment, and said: "From today to tomorrow, there would be a release from that difficulty, and now we are very hungry." So, they rushed towards the servants and harmed them and took the two loafs each. In this way, the promised punishment went before to them in the appointed term, thereupon they regretted, but it was of no profit to them to regret. The second group did not attach to the servants for fear of punishment. But at the same time, they took two loafs each for they were possessed by severe hunger. In this way, they became safe from the punishment, but won not the valuable gift. The third group said: "Let's sit at the sight of the servants in order not to miss us. But if they give us, let's take only one loaf with which we would be satisfied, perchance we would win the valuable gift." Actually, they won the valuable gift.

The fourth group hid themselves in the corners of the field and kept away

from the sight of the servants, and said: "If they follow us and give us we would be satisfied with one loaf for each, and if they miss us, then, let's undergo the severity of hunger tonight, perchance we would have the power to abandon displeasure, and thus attain the rank of ministry and closeness to the presence of the king." But this was of no profit to them for the servants pursued them in every corner and gave each a loaf. That state remained for many days until, by chance, three hid in one corner and the sights of the servants did not fall on them, who were engaged by something from long inspection. The result is that those three spent the night in severe hunger. Two of them said: "Would that we faced the servants and took our food, for we could not endure patience on hunger." But the third kept silent until morning, thereupon he alone attained the rank of ministry and closeness to the king.

That is the similitude of the people. The field symbolizes life of this world; the gate of the field death; the unknown appointed term the Day of Judgement; the promise of ministry the guarantee of martyrdom for the reliant if he dies as hungry, pleased and satisfied, without delaying his reward to the Day of Judgement, for martyrs are living in the presence of their Lord, and given their sustenance regularly; the one who attaches to the servants the aggressor who depends on means only; the subjugated servants the means; the one sitting in the apparent places of the field at the sight of the servants the dwellers of cities and villages, in the mosques and places of worship in the state of quietness; and those hidden in the corners the wanderers in the desert in the state of reliant, and means follow them, and sustenance comes to them except in vary rare cases: and if one of them dies as hungry, well pleased and satisfied, he would have the rank of martyrdom and closeness to Allah Almighty.

The people really are divided into those four divisions: from each hundred, about ninety attach themselves to the means, seven sit at cities and villages, in mosques and places of worship, exposing themselves to the means once they come to them, and the remaining three wander in tours in desert and mountain passes, two of whom were displeased, while it is the remaining one only who won the rank of closeness. That was the state during the previous times. But now, these who abandon the means are no more than one per ten thousand.

THE SECOND PURPOSE: TO KEEP A BENEFIT

EXPOSITION OF RELIANCE AS REGARDS THE CAUSES OF SAVING AND THE AMOUNT TO BE SAVED

Whoever has property, whether by means of inheritance, earning or any other means, has three states, and no more:

The first is to take only what satisfies his need at the time. That is, to eat if he is hungry, put on clothes if he is naked, and purchase a humble dwelling place if he needs residence, and distribute what is beyond his need immediately, without saving anything of it except for what he knows he would distribute in such a way. By so doing, he would fulfill the requirements of reliance; and that is the highest degree of reliance.

The second state is on the opposite side of that, therewith one turns out from the sphere of reliance. That is to save as much as is sufficient for a

whole year and more. This one does not belong to the reliant in principle. It is said that from among animals, only three save foodstuff: the mouse, the ant and the son of Adam.

The third case is to save as much as is sufficient only for forty days and less. However, by so doing, would he be deprived of the station of praise promised for the reliant in the hereafter? The matter is debatable. According to Sahl, by so doing, one turns out from the limit of reliance. But Al-Khawas is of the opinion that saving for forty days is not sufficient to turn one out from the limit of reliance, but to save more turns him out from the limit of reliance. Abu Talib Al-Makki says that even by saving as much as is sufficient for over forty days does not turn him out from the limit of reliance. Anyway, this dispute is meaningless since saving in principle is permissible.

It might be thought that saving in principle contradicts reliance. Hence, the difference of estimation is pointless. Every kind of reward promised for a special rank is given in proportion to its degrees; and each rank has a beginning and an end. Those of end are called the precedents, and those of the beginning the companions of the right side. Moreover, the companions of the right side also are of different degrees, and the same is true of the precedents. The highest degree of the companions of the right side is adjacent to the lowest degree of the precedents. For this reason, the difference of estimation is meaningless.

In verification, reliance by abandonment of saving is not achieved except by shortening the hope. People are different as to the length and shortness of their hope. The shortest hope is for a day and a night and less, whereas the longest takes up the man's entire lifetime; and in between both extremes, there are countless degrees. Whoever, for example, has hope as short as a month is closer to the purpose than him whose hopes is as long as a whole year, and so on. To bind it by forty days according to the appointment of Moses "peace be upon him" with Allah Almighty is unlikely, for this incident was not intended to show the duration of concession given to hope, but Moses "peace be upon him" was not to deserve what he was promised except after the passage of forty days, for a Divine mystery which none knows but Allah Almighty, like the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Allah Almighty covered with His Hand the clay from which Adam was created for forty mornings." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud and Salman Al-Farisi, and it is false).

Therefore, whoever saves as much as is sufficient for more than a year is of weak heart and faith, and relies only on the apparent means, therewith he turns out from the station of reliance (on Allah Almighty), since he is uncertain of the power of the Real Disposer of affairs to manipulate the hidden means. In sum, the degree of everyone is determined by the shortness or length of his hope. It is only the shortness of hope that prevents one from saving. So, it is preferable for one not to save at all, even though his heart is weak, for the less he saves, the more excellent reward he would receive.

It is narrated that a poor one died, thereupon the Messenger of Allah

"Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" commanded Ali or Usamah Ibn Zaid "Allah be pleased with them" to wash his dead body and they washed and shrouded him in his garment. When he was buried, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to his companions: "He would be raised on the Day of Judgement with his face as bright as is the moon on the night when it is full; and had it not been for a characteristic he had, surely, he would have been raised with his face as shining as is the sun." We asked: "What is that O Messenger of Allah?" He "peace be upon him" said: "He used to observe much fasts, stand (at night for supererogatory prayers), and remember Allah Almighty more often. But, at the same time, whenever winter came upon him, he would save the summer suite for his next summer, and whenever summer came upon him, he would save the winter suite for his next winter." Then, He, "peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, you have been given the least portion of certainty and determination of patience."

However, the mug, the blade (or razor), the pot, and the like of those which man needs regularly do not belong to things like money and clothes. Indeed, saving those does not decrease the degree of reliance. But one does not need the garment of winter in summer, and the same is true of the garment of summer, which one does not need in winter. But this applies only to him who is not disturbed by abstention from saving, nor does his soul covet of what is in the hand of the people, nor does his heart turn but to the Real Disposer of affairs. If his abstention from saving causes trouble to him and distracts him from worship, celebration of Allah Almighty and meditation of His signs, to be sure, saving becomes preferable for him. Moreover, if he keeps an estate whose income satisfies his need therewith he would not be diverted from worship, it would be preferable for him, for the purpose is to mend the heart to be devoted entirely to the celebration and remembrance of Allah Almighty.

How many a person who is engaged by the presence of money, and how many a person who is engaged by the loss of money. What is forbidden is that which distracts and diverts from Allah Almighty, otherwise, the world itself is not forbidden, neither in its presence nor in its absence. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was sent as a Messenger to all kinds of people, including traders, craftsmen, farmers, businessmen, etc. He neither ordered the traders to leave their trade, nor the craftsmen to leave their crafts, nor those who did not work in them to engage in them: He "peace be upon him" invited all the people to Allah Almighty, and guided them to the fact that their felicity and salvation lie in turning their hearts from this world, and devoting them entirely to Allah Almighty. The fundament of engagement in Allah Almighty is the heart. The remedy of the weak-hearted is to save only what satisfies his needs, as well as the remedy of the strong is to abstain from saving.

That ruling is specific to the single. But as for the one responsible for a family, to save for his dependents as much as is sufficient to sustain them for a whole year does not turn him out of the sphere of reliance. But to save more

invalidates reliance, for the means reoccur by the reoccurrence of years. So, to save what is sufficient for more than a year goes back to the weakness of his heart, which contradicts the power of reliance. The reliant is a monotheist who has a strong heart, and is reassured and certain of the bounty and favor of Allah Almighty, confident of His manipulation, giving no care to the apparent means.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saved for his dependents as much as is sufficient to sustain them for a whole year. At the same time, he forbade Umm Ayman and others to save anything even for the morrow. He also forbade Bilal "Allah be pleased with him" to save even a fragment of bread to break fast on it, and said to him: "Spend, O Bilal, and fear not that (Allah) the Lord of the Throne (of Majesty) would withhold from you." He "peace be upon him" said: "If you are asked to give anything, do not withhold it, and if you give, do not save anything." (At-Tabarani and Al-Hakim on the authority of Abu Sa'id). He "peace be upon him" shortened his hope to the extent that whenever he urinated, he would practice Tayammum, even though water was close to him. In justification, he said: "What does make me know? Perhaps I may (die and) not be able to reach it." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

Were the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" to save, this would have decreased nothing from his reliance, for he was not to be confident of his saving. But he left saving in order to instruct the strong among his nation, who were weak in comparison with him. He "peace be upon him" saved as much as is sufficient to sustain his dependents for a whole year, not because of his weakness or the weakness of his dependents. He "peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah loves that His concessions should be acted upon in the same way as He loves for his determinations." (Ahmad and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Umar). This means that he did so to please the hearts of the weak among his nation, lest their weakness would lead them to despair and hopelessness, and cause them to leave the good that is available to them because of their failure to attain the highest degree. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was not sent but as a mercy for all the worlds, with their different kinds and degrees.

Having understood this, you come to know that saving might cause harm to some people, and no harm to others. In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Abu Umamah Al-Bahili "Allah be pleased with him" that one of the companions of Suffah, i.e. the poor persons among the Emigrants, died, and they found no shroud to shroud his dead body in it, thereupon he "peace be upon him" said: "Inspect his garment." They did and found two Dinars. On that He "peace be upon him" said: "Those are two (causes of) cauterization (he would receive in the fire of Hell)." (Ahmad on the authority of Shahr Ibn Hawshab from Abu Umamah). Many other Muslims died and left a lot of money, but even, he did not say the same about them.

His saying is open to two interpretations: one is that he intended the real

cauterization of the fire of Hell, as shown in the statement of Allah Almighty: " On the Day when heat will be produced out of that (wealth) in the fire of Hell, and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, "This is the (treasure) which you buried for yourselves: taste you, then, the (treasures) you buried!" (At-Tawbah 35)

﴿ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴾

This state applies to one who intends to show to the people his asceticism and poverty, although he is lacking it, as a kind of dissembling. The second interpretation is that he saved those not by way of dissembling, but saving them decreased his degree of perfection, in the same way as the traces of two cauterizations reduce the beauty of face. However, everything one saves decreases his degree in the hereafter accordingly. None is given anything in this world but that it would decrease his degree in the hereafter.

That saving with the heart being disengaged from what is saved does not necessarily invalidate reliance is confirmed by the following narration from Bishr on the authority of Al-Hussain Al-Maghazili, one of his companions: I was in the house of Bishr one day at forenoon when an old man of lean cheeks came to visit him and Bishr stood in respect for him, and it was his habit not to stand for anyone. He gave me a handful of Dirhams and said to me: "Buy for us of the most delicious kinds of food as much as you could." He never said to me the like of that before. I brought the food and served it, and he shared food with him, given that I have never seen him sharing food with anyone else. We ate until we satisfied our need and a great quantity of food remained. The man took it and carried it within his garment and went away. I wondered at that and disliked it from him. Bishr said to me: "Perhaps you have disapproved his behavior." I said: "Yes. He took the remaining food without permission." He said: "This is our brother Fath Al-Mawsili. He came from Mawsil to visit us. He intended to instruct us that if reliance is valid, there is no harm in saving."

THE THIRD PURPOSE: TO AVERT HARM EXPOSITION OF SEEKING MEANS THAT AVERT HARM WHICH LEADS TO FEAR

It should be known to you that harm might expose one to fear on himself or on his property; and it is not requisite for reliance to leave the means of averting it. An example of the harm that leads to fear on oneself is to sleep in a land densely inhabited with wild animals, or under an inclining wall, about to collapse, etc: This is forbidden, and the one who does so exposes himself to destruction without benefit. But the means here are divided into those which are certain, those which are probable, and those which are thought to be. To leave the third category, i.e. those thought to be is requisite for reliance. They are like the charm and cauterization in relation to averting harm. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" described the reliant as those who do not practice charm nor get themselves cauterized. But he did not described them as those who, whenever came out to a cold place, would not put on a cloak to protect themselves from the expected cold.

But it is possible to leave the means that are certain to avert harm. If one receives harm from another, and he has the power to avert his harm and exact retribution, or to endure and keep patient, then, it is requisite for reliance to choose to endure and keep patient. In confirmation of that, Allah said: "(He is) Lord of the East and the West: there is no god but He: take Him therefore for (your) Disposer of Affairs. And have patience with what they say, and leave them with noble (dignity)." (Al-Muzzammil 9-10)

﴿ رَّبُّ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَٱتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ۝ وَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَٱهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ۝ ﴾

He further said: " We shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you may cause us. For those who put their trust should put their trust on Allah." (Ibrahim 12)

﴿ وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاذَيْتُمُونَا ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ۝ ﴾

And: "and heed not their annoyances, but put your trust in Allah. For enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs." (Al-Ahzab 48)

﴿ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ۝ ﴾

And: "Therefore patiently persevere, as did (all) Messengers of inflexible purpose." (Al-Ahqaf 35)

﴿ فَٱصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْعَزْمِ مِنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ ۝ ﴾

And: "an excellent reward for those who do (good)! Those who persevere in patience, and put their trust in their Lord and Cherisher." (Al-Ankabut 58-59)

﴿ نِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ۝ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝ ﴾

That is specific to the harm of the people. But to keep patient on the harm of wild animals, scorpions and female-snakes, not to avert them is not requisite for reliance, since it has no benefit at all. Similarly, the work is not intended for itself in so much as to help one do the religious affairs.

The same is true of the harm that leads to fear on one's property. By no means would reliance be defective by closing the door of the house when one comes out of the house, or by fastening the camel, and the like of that, for those means have been learnt to be among the established ways of Allah Almighty. For this reason, when the Bedouin indulged in fastening the camel under the pretext that he had relied on Allah Almighty, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "Tie it and then put your trust in Allah."

In a similar context, Allah Almighty said: " take your precautions." (An-Nisa 71)

﴿ خُذُواْ حِذْرَكُمْ ﴾

In description of the fear prayer, He Almighty said: " taking their arms with them." (An-Nisa 102)

﴿وَلْيَأْخُذُواْ حِذْرَهُمْ﴾

He Almighty further said: "Against them make ready your strength to the

utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies." (Al-Anfal 60)

﴿ وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُم مَّا ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن قُوَّةٍ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ ٱلْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِۦ عَدُوَّ ٱللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ ﴾

He Almighty said to Moses "peace be upon him": "March forth with My servants by night: for you are sure to be pursued." (Ad-Dukhan 23)

﴿ فَأَسْرِ بِعِبَادِى لَيْلًا إِنَّكُم مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴾

To be sure, by night one gets fortified from the eyes of the enemies. When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" hid in the cave (of Thawr) from the eyes of the enemy, it was to avert harm.

You may argue: "It is related from many people that the lion placed its hand on the shoulder of some of them, and they kept motionless." In reply to that, let me say that some people used to ride the lion, and subjugate it under their control. So, let not this station deceive you. Although it might be true in itself, it is not fitting for the people to imitate and follow. That is a high station of miracles, and it is not requisite for reliance, and it has some mysteries which none knows but a very few.

You may further ask: "Is there any sign therewith to know that I have reached that station?" in reply, let me say that the one who reaches does not need any sign. But anyway, among the signs is that something like a dog inside yourself is subjugated to you, called the anger, which continues to bite you as well as others than you. If such is subjugated to you in such a way that if it is irritated and provoked, it would not move but with your hint, you might then raise up to a degree in which a lion, which is the king of wild animals, is subjugated under your control. The dog of your house is more entitled to be subjugated to you than the dog of the desert, and the internal dog within you more entitled than that of your house, and so on. If the internal dog is not subjugated to you, covet not of getting the external dog subjugated to you.

You may argue: "Then, if the reliant takes his arms for fear of the enemy, closes his door for fear of the thief, and ties his camel for fear of losing it, by which consideration should he be regarded a reliant?" in reply to that, let me say that in this case, he is reliant by knowledge and state. As for knowledge, it is that the thief, for example, would not rush by himself towards opening the door unless he is doomed by Allah to do so. How many a door is close but in vain, and how many a camel is tied, but it dies or runs away, and how many a person takes his arms and is killed or overpowered. So, rely not on those means in so much as on the causer of those causes and means, as we have previously set forth the example for the legal representative in the dispute. If the mandatory even attends and brings the record with him, he does not rely on himself and his record in so much as on the sufficiency and power of his legal representative.

As for the state, it is to be satisfied with the fate of Allah Almighty in his house and in himself, saying: "O Allah! If You invest with authority such as takes what is in the house in Your Cause and I am well pleased with Your decree. I do not know what You have given me in order to take it back, or

deposited with and lent me in order to take it back once again; and I do not know whether what You have given me was preordained to be the sustenance of another one than me. Anyway, however You decree, I am satisfied with it. I have not closed the door for I dislike or fear of Your decree. But I did so according to Your established way of organizing means. I have no confidence but of You, O Causer of causes and means."

Such being his state and knowledge, he would not turn out of the limit of reliance by fastening the camel, taking up arms and closing the door. If he returns and finds his luggage in the house being stolen, let him consider his heart: if he finds himself happy and pleased with that, putting in mind that Allah Almighty has taken that from him only to increase his sustenance in the hereafter, then, his station of reliance is valid, and he has proved true to it, otherwise, he then is not true to his claim of reliance, for the station of reliance is beyond that of asceticism, and asceticism is valid only from him who does not feel regret for what he has missed in this world.

You may argue: "Then, how should the reliant have property in order to be taken?" in reply, let me say that the house of the reliant could hardly be empty from any kind of property, like a bowl to eat therein, a mug to drink therein, a pot to perform ablution therein, a container to keep his provision therein, a stick to avert evil from himself therewith, to the end of those necessities of living. Furthermore, he might have money in his hand in expectation of a needy or indigent to give it to him. His saving with that intention does not invalidate his reliance. It is not requisite for reliance to get rid of the mug in which he drinks, the container in which he preserves his provision, etc. this is true only of what is beyond the need and necessity, for the established way of Allah Almighty requires that good should reach the reliant poor, and this does not apply to mugs, food containers, and the like of them. To behave in opposition to the established way of Allah Almighty is not requisite for reliance. For this reason, Al-Khawas used to take in journey the rope, the pot, the file, the needle, but not provision.

You may argue: "Then, how should one imagine he could not feel sorry for losing the luggage of which he is in need? Had he not desired it, surely, he would not have kept it and closed the door of the house on it; and since he kept it for he was in need of it, then, how should he not be afflicted for losing it?" in reply, let me say that he kept it in order to seek its aid to do the obligations of his religion, thinking that it was better for him to have this luggage, and had it not been for his benefit, surely, Allah Almighty would not have given it to him. But it may be that his benefit lies in being put to trial of losing it, in order to toil more in achieving his purpose, and get much reward in that toiling and fatigue.

But when it was taken from him, his assumption changed, for in all states, he has full confidence of Allah Almighty. In justification, he says to himself: "Had it not been for the fact that Allah Almighty knows that my benefit lies in having this thing with me up till now, and that my benefit lies in losing it immediately, He would not have taken it from me." It is only by this

assumption that sadness is imagined to leave him. That is because he does not rejoice of the means as being means, but of being facilitated to him by the Causer of causes and means, out of His bounty and care. In this he is like a patient in front of a merciful physician who accepts all what he does with him: if he gives food to him, he would rejoice saying: "Had it not been for the fact that he knows that food benefits me, he would not have given it to me." If he, after that, takes food away from him, he also would rejoice saying: "Had it not been for the fact that he knows that food harms me, he would not have taken it away from me."

Whoever does not think about the favor and bounty of Allah in the same way as a patient thinks about his merciful physician, who is well-experienced in the science of medicine, no reliance is valid from him. Whoever knows Allah Almighty, and gets acquainted with His deeds and acts, and His established way of mending His servants, he would not rejoice of means at all for he does not know which of means is good for him, as Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I do not care whether I have become rich or poor, for I do not know which of both is better for me."

As such, the reliant should not care whether or not his luggage has been stolen from him, for he does not know which of both is better for him in the world and the hereafter. How many a luggage in this world which is a cause of man's destruction in the hereafter! How many a rich who is tried by an incident because of his richness, for the sake of which he says: "Would that I am a poor!"

Exposition Of Etiquettes Of Reliant When Their Luggage Is Stolen

The reliant should have many etiquettes as for the luggage of his house once he leaves it: The first is to close the door, without exceeding the due limits of keeping it, such as putting more than a lock on the door. Indeed, Malik Ibn Dinar used not to put a lock on the door: but he rather used to straighten it with a rope saying: "Had it not been for dogs, I would not have even straightened it."

The second is not to leave in the house such luggage as instigates the thieves to come to steal it. Thus, leaving such an expensive luggage could lead thieves to commit disobedience, as well as exceeding the due limits of preserving it could provoke in them the motive for committing theft. For this reason, when Al-Mughirah presented a pot (of water) to Malik Ibn Dinar, he said to him: "Take it back, for I have no need of it." He asked him: "Why?" he said: "My enemy (Satan) whispers to me that a thief might steal it." He seemed to have avoided causing the thief to commit disobedience on the one hand, and engagement with the Satan's whisper that it might be stolen on the other hand. In description of that, Abu Sulaiman said: "That portends the weakness of the hearts of Sufis. He abstained in this world: Then, what harm should he receive from leaving it?"

The third: as for what he is forced to leave in the house, he should, when coming out and leaving it, be pleased with the decree of Allah Almighty concerning it, saying to himself: "Whatever a thief takes, he is free of

obligation from it, or it is in the Cause of Allah; and if he is a poor, then, that is an object of charity to him; and even if he is not poor, at least he is more eligible to get it." In this way, he should have two intentions applicable to the poor and the rich: The first is that his property is to hold back disobedience, for one might become free of need because of it, and dispense with theft, and as he has made him free of obligation after taking it, then, his sin of devouring the unlawful would be removed from him. Het other is not to wrong another Muslim by stealing his property, making his property a ransom for his property.

When he intends to maintain the property of somebody other than him by making his own property a ransom for it, or to avert or at least alleviate the sin from the thief, he proves sincere to Muslims, and complies with the statement of the Prophet "Peace be upon him": "Help your brother, no matter wrongful or wronged he might be." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas). To help the wrongful is to prevent him from committing injustice; and to forgive him is to cancel out and hold back injustice. He should put in mind that such intention never harms him even in the least, for it neither gives the thief an authority over anyone, nor does it change the Divine decree. But by asceticism, this intention is achieved. If his property is taken, he would have, by each Dirham, seven hundred and more good deeds, depending on that intention; and even if it is not taken, he would receive a reward too. In confirmation of that, it is narrated from the Prophet "Peace be upon him" that he told about him who left coitus interruptus that he would receive the reward of a babe to be potentially born for him from that sexual relation and live until he fights in the Cause of Allah, even if he is not actually born at all. That is because one's portion from begetting children is only the sexual intercourse, but the matter of creation, life, sustenance and survival, is not up to him. If he is created, he would get a reward for his act; and the same is true of theft.

The fourth is that if he finds his property being stolen, he should not grieve, but rather rejoice if he could, and say to himself: "Had there been no good for that, surely, it would not have been taken from me by Allah Almighty." Furthermore, if he does not have the intention to make it in the Cause of Allah, at least he should not be excessive in pursuing it and having bad assumptions of Muslims. But if he has the intention to make it in the Cause of Allah, he should not pursue it, for he has sent it forward as ammunition for him to the hereafter. If it is returned back to him, he should not accept it particularly when he has made it in the Cause of Allah. But should he accept it, it is his own, for ownership does not lapse only by that intention, even this is unfavorable in the sight of the reliant.

It is narrated from Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with him" that his she-camel was stolen, and he went in pursuit of it until he was troubled. Then he said: "Let it in the Cause of Allah Almighty." Then, he entered the mosque and offered a two-rak'ah prayer. Then a man came to him and said: "O Abu Abd-Ar-Rahman! Your she-camel is in such and such a place." He put on his sandals and stood up to go with him, but later he said: "I pray for forgiveness

of Allah." He sat down. It was said to him: "Would you not go to bring it?" he said: "But I have made it in the Cause of Allah."

One of the sheikhs said: "I saw in a dream one of my brothers and asked him: "What has Allah Almighty done with you?" He said: "He has forgiven for me and admitted me to Paradise, and showed to me my abodes in it, and I saw them with my own eyes." But at the same time, he seemed sad and gloomy. I asked him: "How has He forgiven for you and admitted you to Paradise and at the same time you seem sad and gloomy?" he took breath and said: "Yes. I would remain sad to the Day of Judgement." I asked him about the reason and he said: "When I saw my abodes in Paradise, some stations in the highest part of Paradise were shown to me the like of which I have never seen, of which I rejoiced. But when I intended to enter them, a caller from above called: "Turn him away from them, for they are not his, but they are for him who decided the way." I asked: "Then, what is to decide the way?" it was said: "You used to say about a thing that it is in the Cause of Allah, and later retract from that. Had you decided your way, we would have decided those for you."

It is related from one of the worshippers that he was sleeping in Mecca besides a man who had a treasure with him, when the latter got up and made sense that he had lost his treasure, and accused the worshipper of stealing it. He asked him: "How much was it?" he told him and he went to the house and weighed for him the like of it from his own property and gave it to him. Later on his companions told him that it was they who had taken the treasure out of joking. He went in their company to the worshipper and apologized to him, and returned to him the gold, but he rejected and said: "Take it as good and lawful. I am not to take back a thing I have given out in the Cause of Allah." He did not accept it. But in the face of their insistence, he invited his son and went on dividing it in parcels and distributing them among the poor, until nothing thereof remained.

Those were the etiquettes of the righteous predecessors. Whoever took a loaf to give it to a poor, by way of charity, and he did not find him, he disliked to take it back after giving it out of his property, and rather favored to give it to another poor; and he did the same with Dirhams, Dinars, and all items of charity.

The fifth, which is the least in degree, is not to invoke evil upon the thief. If the reliant does, his reliance would become invalid, for his doing so indicates his aversion and grief for what he has lost, and his asceticism would become unsound too. Moreover, if he is excessive in his invocation of evil upon him, his reward for losing his things would vanish too. According to a particular narration: "Whoever invokes evil upon his wrongdoer has indeed taken back his right."

It is related that a horse belonging to Ar-Rabie Ibn Khuthaim, as much as twenty thousand Dirhams, was stolen while he was standing in prayer. But he neither interrupted his prayer, nor was he moved to pursue it. Some people came to console him and he said to them: "Indeed, I have seen the thief

untying it." They said to him: "Then, what has prevented you from deterring him?" he said: "I was occupied by something dearer to me than that." He meant prayer. They went on invoking evil upon him, thereupon he said to them: "Do not invoke evil upon him, but rather speak good, for I have made it an object of charity for him."

In a similar context, it was said to somebody about something that had been stolen from him: "Do you not invoke evil upon your wrongdoer?" he said: "I do not like to be helpful of Satan against him." It was said to him: "Then, what do you see if he returned it to you?" He said: "I neither take nor look at it for I have made it lawful for him."

It was said to another one: "Invoke evil upon your wrongdoer." He said: "None has wronged me." He further said: "He indeed has wronged himself and not me. Is it not sufficient for this poor that he has wronged himself in order for me to add evil to his evil?"

A person insulted Al-Hajjaj so much for his wrongness and injustice in the presence of a righteous predecessor, thereupon he said: "Do not insult him so much, for Allah Almighty takes back the right of Al-Hajjaj from him who violates his honor, in the same way as He takes back the right from Al-Hajjaj when he devours the property or takes the life of anyone else."

It is narrated in a particular Hadith: "A servant might be wronged thereupon he continues to insult and abuse his wrongdoer until it becomes as much as is equal to and even more than the injustice committed against him, with the result that the wrongdoer turns to have right to demand from him with what he insulted him more than his injustice, thereupon retribution would be exacted from him (on the Day of Judgement)."

The sixth is to grieve for the sake of the thief and his disobedience and the sin he has committed which exposes himself to the punishment of Allah Almighty, and give thanks to Allah Almighty for He made him wronged and not wrongful, and made it shortage in his world and not in his religion. In this context, one made a complaint to a religious scholar that a robber cut the way on him and stole his property, thereupon he said to him: "If you do not grieve for the fact that among the Muslims there is such as makes lawful that property for himself more than you grieve for the loss of your own property, then, you are not sincere (in advice and counsel) to Muslims." On another occasion, some Dinars were stolen from Ali Ibn Al-Fudail while he was performing Tawaf round the House, and his father saw him later weeping in sigh. he asked him: "Do you weep for the loss of those Dinars?" he said: "No, by Allah, but I grieve for that poor man lest he would be questioned on the Day of Judgement, without argument to have to defend himself."

Those were the etiquettes of the righteous predecessors, may Allah have mercy upon them all.

THE FOURTH PURPOSE: TO PREVENT HARM

EXPOSITION OF SEEKING TO PREVENT HARM LIKE TREATING AILMENT AND THE LIKE OF IT

It should be known to you that the means by which an ailment is removed

are divided into what is fully certain, like water that removes the harm of thirst, and bread that removes the harm of hunger; And almost certain, like cupping and bloodletting and medicine; and what is thought to be like cauterization and charming.

As for the fully certain means, it is not out of reliance to leave it, and even it is unlawful to leave it, if there is fear of death. As for the illusive, it is requisite for reliance to leave it, for the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" described the reliant as those who leave such illusive means. The strongest of them is cauterization followed by charming, and the weakest is the evil or bad omen.

As for the middle degree pertaining to the almost certain means, such as medication with the apparent causes offered by physicians, doing them does not contradict reliance, unlike the illusive ones, whereas leaving them is not forbidden unlike the fully certain means. Sometimes, avoiding might be better than doing them, whereas in other times and in relation to particular persons, doing might be better than avoiding them. It is in the middle way between both extremes.

That medication does not contradict reliance is attested by the deeds, acts and words of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". As for his words, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There is no disease but that it has a medicine, that is known by such as knows it, and unknown by such as is ignorant of it, except for death." (Ahmad and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud; Al-Bukhari abridged on the authority of Abu Hurairah; and Muslim abridged on the authority of Jabir).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Treat yourselves with medicine, O servants of Allah, for Allah has created ailment and medicine (for it)." (Ibn Majah and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Usamah Ibn Sharik).

Once, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about medicine and charming whether they aught repel the Divine decree of Allah, thereupon he said: "Those are doomed by Allah Almighty." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Khizamah from his father).

It is further narrated in a particular Hadith that he "peace be upon him" said: "I have never passed by a company of angels but that they said to me: "Tell your Ummah to use cupping." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud; and Ibn Majah on the authority of Anas).

It is narrated in another Hadith that he "peace be upon him" commanded people to treat themselves with cupping saying: "Get yourselves cupped particularly on the seventeenth, nineteenth, or twenty first night, lest blood would erupt in your bodies and cause you to die." (Al-Bazzar on the authority of Ibn Abbas, with whom it is stopped).

Here he "peace be upon him" mentioned that the eruption of the blood causes death by permission of Allah Almighty, and that taking out blood (by

cupping) is salvation form it. There is no difference between taking out the destructive blood from underneath the skin, and taking out the scorpion from underneath the garment or the serpent from the house. It is not requisite for reliance to leave that. It is like the pouring of water on the fire to extinguish it and avert its harm once it flames in the house.

It is narrated in a particular Hadith of broken chain of transmission: "Whoever gets cupped on Tuesday that coincides with the seventeenth day of the month, it would be a medicine for him for the ailments along a year to come." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Ma'qil Ibn Yasar; and Ibn Hayyan on the authority of Anas).

As for his command "peace be upon him" he commanded more than one of his companions to get cupped, and he "peace be upon him" cut off a vein of Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh "Allah be pleased with him" by bloodletting. (This is narrated by Muslim on the authority of Jabir). He also cauterized (the injury of) As'ad Ibn Zurarah "Allah be pleased with him". (At-Tabarani on the authority of Sahl Ibn Hunaif). He "peace be upon him" said to Ali "Allah be pleased with him" who had an eye trouble: "Do not eat of that kind of food (i.e. fresh dates), and rather eat of that kind (i.e. vegetables cooked with powdered parley) since it is more fitting for you." (Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Umm Al-Mundhir). Once, he "peace be upon him" said to Suhaib "Allah be pleased with him" and he saw him eating dates while he had an eye trouble: "Do you eat dates while you have an eye trouble?" he said: "I eat in the other side (of the mouth)." On that he "peace be upon him" smiled.

As for his act "peace be upon him" it is narrated in a Hadith on the authority of one of the members of the Prophet's household that he "peace be upon him" used to apply kohl every night, get cupped once every month, and drink medicine every year; and more than once he got medicine from the scorpion and others like it.

It is narrated that whenever revelation was sent down on him "peace be upon him" he would have a headache, and to get rid of it, he would cover his head with henna. According to another narration, whenever he had a sore, he would treat it with henna, and sometimes with dust. The narrations about his medical treatment and command that the people should do so are beyond calculation. A book has been composed about that called the Prophetic Medicine.

It is narrated in an Israeli tale that Moses "peace be upon him" fell ill and the children of Israel came to visit him and recognized his ailment and asked him to get medicine for it, but he rejected and said: "I shall never get medicine until He cures me without medicine." But his ailment got aggravated and lasted for a long time. They said to him: "The medicine of that ailment is famous and experimented, and we always treat ourselves with it." But he insisted on his rejection. Allah Almighty revealed to him: "By My Honor and Glory, I would never cure you until you treat yourself with what they mentioned to you." He said to them: "Then, treat me with the medicine you have mentioned to me." They did and he recovered. But he had doubt about

that, thereupon Allah revealed to him: "You like to invalidate My wisdom with your reliance on Me: Who made medicine for the benefit of people other than Me?"

According to another tradition, one of the Prophets "peace be upon them" suffered from an ailment, thereupon Allah Almighty revealed to him to eat eggs. Another Prophet complained of weakness, thereupon Allah Almighty revealed to him to eat meat and milk, for it has the water of power. It is said that the weakness intended is the sexual impotence.

It is further narrated that a people made a complaint to their Prophet about the ugliness of their children, thereupon Allah Almighty revealed to him to tell them to feed their pregnant women with quince, for it beautifies the babe in the womb, and it is better to be eaten in the third and fourth months of pregnancy, during which Allah Almighty gives form to the fetus. They used to serve the pregnant woman with quince, and the confined because of post-partum bleeding with fresh dates.

Thus, it seems clear that the causer of causes has made His established way to associate causes with effects out of wisdom. No doubt, medicines are causes subjugated by the ruling of Allah Almighty, like the other causes. As well as the bread is the treatment of hunger, and the water the treatment of thirst, all medicines are made to treat the different ailments and diseases with only two differences: one is that to treat hunger and thirst with food and water is evidently clear, and well-known by all the people, while to treat any disease with its related medicine is known only by some private people. The other is that in order for the medicine to be effective, there should be many conditions and circumstances the absence of all or some of which might cause the medicine to fail in treatment, whereas to treat hunger or thirst does not require but food and water, not counting such conditions and circumstances. All of this goes back to the manipulation of the Causer of causes, out of His perfect power and wisdom. So, there is no harm on the reliant to use them while keeping his eye on the Causer of causes apart from the physician and medicine.

It is narrated from Moses "peace be upon him" that he said: "O Lord! From Whom do ailment and medicine come?" He said: "From Me." He asked: "Then, what is the benefit of physicians?" He said: "They only earn their sustenance and please My servants, until My cure or death comes." Thus, reliance with medical treatment is to rely with knowledge and state as has previously been shown in the different works that avert harm and bring about benefit. But to leave medicine at all is not requisite for reliance.

You may argue: "Cauterization also is among the means whose benefit is apparent." In reply, let me answer in the negative. It is one of the illusive means, like charming, with the difference that it is to burn the affected place at once, given that it is dispensable. There is no ailment to be treated with cauterization but that it has a medicine instead of it. To burn with fire is destructive, although it is and dispensable at the same time, unlike cupping and bloodletting, which are not replaceable. That is why the Messenger of

Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" forbade cauterization and not charming (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

In this respect, it is narrated that Imran Ibn Al-Hussain "Allah be pleased with him" fell ill and they suggested to him to get cauterized, but he rejected. In the face of their persistence, he accepted and got cauterized. After that he used to say: "I used to see light and heard voice, and angels used to greet me, and when I got cauterized, all of this disappeared from me." He further said: "We got cauterized, and by Allah, there was no success nor prosperity." Then, he repented from that, and turned to Allah Almighty, thereupon Allah restored to him what he used to find concerning the angels. In his comment on that he said to Mutarrif Ibn Abdullah: "Do you not see the angels therewith Allah Almighty honored me, and how He restored them to me?" earlier, he told him that he had lost them (after he got cauterized).

Exposition of the fact that leaving medicine might be praiseworthy in some cases, and that it indicates to the power of reliance, and that it does not contradict the act of the messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"

It should be known to you that the number of the righteous predecessors who got medical treatment from ailments are beyond calculation. But at the same time, some among the elite left it. Being so, it might be thought to be shortage of reliance. But had leaving it been out of perfection of reliance, surely, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" would have left it, for none else could be expected to be more reliant on Allah than him "peace be upon him".

It is narrated from Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" that when he fell ill it was said to him: "Would that we invite a physician to see you." He said: "The (Real) physician caught a glimpse of me and said: "I do what I like to do."" In another context, it was said to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" during his fatal illness: "What do you complain?" He said: "My sins." It was further said to him: "Then, what do you desire?" He said: "The forgiveness of my Lord." They asked him: "Should we not invite a physician to see you?" he said: "No doubt, the physician has made me ill." It was said to Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" when he got eye trouble: "Would that you treat them!" he said: "Indeed, I am engaged from them." It was said to him: "Then, would that you ask Allah Almighty to cure them." He said: "I ask Him only for what is more significant in my sight than them."

It is further narrated that Ar-Rabie Ibn Khuthaim was paralyzed, thereupon it was said to him: "Would that you get medicine!" he said: "I intended to do so, but I soon remembered Aad and Thamud people, and the others like them: although they had so many physicians among them, both the physician and the ill were destroyed, and the medicine availed them naught."

Ahmad Ibn Hanbal used to say: "It is better for such as follows the way of reliance on Allah Almighty to leave medicine, and if he has ailments, he should not tell the physician about them whenever he asks him."

It was said to Sahl: "When would the servant's reliance become valid?" he said: "When harm befalls him in his body, shortage afflicts him in his property, and he gives no care for that, and rather cares for being maintained and sustained by Allah Almighty."

Some of them then discarded medicine at all, and others disliked it. How to accommodate the act of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" with theirs could be evident only with enumerating the impediments of medicine. Let us say that there are many reasons for leaving medicine, and they go as follows:

The first reason is that the patient is among these to whom some of the unseen is revealed to whom it is revealed that it is time for his death, and this means that the medicine avails him naught. That is known to him once by a true vision, once by anticipation, once by certain revelation, etc. Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" seemed to have left medicine for that reason, for he was among these to whom some unseen matters were revealed. It is narrated that he said to A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" concerning the inheritance: "You have two sisters." At that time, she had only one sister, but his wife was pregnant, and gave birth to a female child. Thus, it was learnt that it was revealed to him that his wife was pregnant and that she would give birth to a female child. So it is not unlikely that the extermination of his time was revealed to him, otherwise, he was not to reject medicine, given that he saw the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" having got medicine, and ordered the Muslims to do so.

The second reason is that the patient is occupied by his own state and destination in the hereafter, which causes him to forget the pain of disease. The result is that his heart is engaged from thinking about medicine. To this fact the speech of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" refers when he said: "I am occupied from them" and the statement of Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him": "I complain of my sins." The pain of his heart for fear of his sins was more grievous than the pain of his body because of his physical ailment.

As such Sahl was occupied: it was said to him: "What is sustenance?" He said: "To remember Allah, the Ever-Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal." It was said to him: "We asked you about what sustains life." He said: "What sustains life is knowledge." It was said: "We asked you about food." He said: "Food is the remembrance (of Allah)." It was said: "We asked you about the nourishment of the body." He said: "What do you have to do with the body? Let Him Who took care of it in the first take care of it in the last. Whenever an ailment befalls it, return it to its maker. Do you not see that if there is a defect in anything, you return it to its maker to repair it?"

The third reason is that the ailment is chronic and the medicine prescribed for it is of no benefit, like cauterization and charming, and that is why the reliant leaves it. To this fact the statement of Ar-Rabie Ibn Khuthaim refers: "I intended to do so, but I soon remembered Aad and Thamud people, and the others like them: although they had so many physicians among them, both

the physician and the ill were destroyed, and the medicine availed them naught." This might be so in reality, or only in the sight of the patient in view of his little practice and experience of medicine. This is why it is close to his certainty that it is of no profit to take it. No doubt, the experienced physician has belief in the benefit of medicine more than anyone else. That is because confidence and assumption are based on belief, and belief depends on experience and practice.

That is the argument of almost all the worshippers and ascetics who left medicine, for medicine in their sight remains groundless and illusive. That is true of some medicines in the sight of those who are well acquainted with the science of therapy, and not true of others. But the non-physician might see all kinds of medicine with one eye, thinking that all are in the same position of cauterization and charming, which causes him to leave medical treatment.

The fourth reason is that the servant intends, by leaving medical treatment, to have the disease continue to exist in order to get reward for his patience on the trial of Allah Almighty, or to put himself to experiment of his power to keep patient. There are many narrations concerning the reward for ailment and disease.

In this respect, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "We, the company of Prophets, are the most tolerable of trials among the people, followed by those who are next (to us in degree), and those who are next (to them). The servant is put to trial in proportion to the strength of his faith. The more his faith is strong, the more his trial is severe, and the weaker his faith is, the less his trial is." (Ahmad, Abu Ya'li and Al-Hakim on the authority of Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas).

According to another narration: "Indeed, Allah Almighty tries His servant with ordeals in the same way as anyone of you tries his gold with fire: some come out as pure gold with no blemish, others less than that and others as black and burnt." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Umamah).

It is narrated on the authority of one from the household of the Prophet "peace be upon him": "Verily, if Allah Almighty loves a servant, He would try him; and if he keeps patient, He would select him; and if he is contented, He would choose him." (Sahib Al-Firdaws on the authority of Ali).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Do you like to be like the straying red camels, neither fall ill nor become weak?" (Ibn Abu Asim, Abu Na'im and Ibn Abd-Al-Barr on the authority of Abu Fatimah).

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "You find that the believer has the healthiest heart and the most diseased body, unlike the hypocrite who has the healthiest body and the most diseased heart."

When ailment and trial were praised in such a great way, some people liked ailment and seized the opportunity of being ill to get the reward for patience on it. Some of them had an ailment which he hid and did not mention to the physician who came to treat him. He favored to tolerate the suffering of the ailment and accept the judgement of Allah Almighty, knowing that the truth

that prevails over his heart is greater than the ailment which possesses his organs could occupy him from it. They also learnt that their prayer while sitting and keeping patient on the fate of Allah Almighty is better than their prayer while standing with health and power.

In confirmation of that, it is narrated that Allah Almighty says to His angels: "Write for My servant the best of what he used to do (when he was healthy), for he is in My fetters, and if I release him, I would substitute him with flesh better than his, and blood better than his; and if I send him to death, I would send him to My mercy." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The best deed (in reward) is that which people force themselves to do." In interpretation of it, it said that it refers to the diseases and disasters that afflict people, to which the following statement of Allah refers: "But it is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you." (Al-Baqarah 216)

﴿ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تُحِبُّوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ﴿٢١٦﴾ ﴾

Sahl used to say: "To leave medicine even if it leads to weakness of acts of worship and shortage of obligatory duties is better than to get medicine for the sake of acts of worship." He was suffering from a chronic disease from which he never got medicine, although he medicated the people from it. Whenever he saw a servant offering prayer while sitting and could not do righteous deeds because of ailment from which he got medicine in order to be able to offer prayer while standing and do the righteous deeds, he would be astonished and say: "No doubt, his prayer while sitting, along with satisfaction and pleasure with his state is better for him than getting medicine to become too powerful to pray while standing." He, like these of Basrah, used to weaken the soul with hunger and break desires, for their knowledge that as little as an atom of deeds of hearts like good pleasure, patience and reliance is much better than as much as mountains of the deeds of organs, and by no means could sickness hinder from the deed of hearts, unless its pain is intolerable. Sahl said once again: "The ailment of body is a mercy from Allah Almighty, whereas ailment of hearts is a punishment from Him."

The fifth reason is that a servant has previously committed sins of which he feels afraid, and for which he is too powerless to make expiation. He then sees that if his ailment lasts long, it might be an expiation for those sins, thereupon he abstains from getting medicine for it, for fear the traces of ailment would go soon.

In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Fever still befalls a servant (so long) until he comes to walk on earth as pure of sins and mistakes." (Abu Ya'li and Ibn Adi on the authority of Abu Hurairah; and At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda').

According to another narration: "The fever of a single day is expiation for the sins to be committed along a whole year." (Al-Quda'i on the authority of

Ibn Mas'ud). In interpretation of it, it is said that it does so because it ruins the power of a whole year. It is also said that man has three hundred and sixty joints, and fever afflicts and pains all of them, and thus the pain of each is expiation for one day.

When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" mentioned that the fever of one day is expiation for a sins to be committed in a whole year, Zaid Ibn Thabit "Allah be pleased with him" asked his Lord to remain fevered, thereupon fever did not leave him at all until he died. The same was asked by a group of Ansari people whom fever did not leave until their death. (Ahmad and Abu Ya'li on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri).

Furthermore, when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, whom Allah Almighty takes away the sight of his eyes, He accepts for him no reward less than Paradise", a lot of Ansari people hoped to be blind.

Jesus "peace be upon him" said: "He is not a learned who does not rejoice of being stricken with ailments in his body and calamities in his property, for the expiation for sins expected from that."

It is narrated that Moses "peace be upon him" saw a servant suffering from great ordeals and trials, thereupon he said: "O Lord! Bestow mercy upon him!" on that Allah said to him: "How should I bestow mercy upon him in that with which I have mercy upon him, i.e. therewith I expiate his sins, and increase him in degrees?"

The sixth reason is that a servant feels the commencements of arrogance and haughtiness because of the long period of being healthy, thereupon whenever he is afflicted with a disease, he leaves medicine for fear that when he recovers, he would soon return to his arrogance and tyranny. However, health is the power of attributes therewith the desires and inclinations are stimulated, and summon one to sins and mistakes, the least of which is to call for enjoyment of what is permissible, which means to waste time and neglect the great profit of opposition of the soul and adherence to the acts of worship. If Allah Almighty intends good for a man, He always alerts him with diseases and calamities. For this reason, it is said: "No believer is free from a disease, a destitution or a slip."

It is narrated that Allah Almighty says: "Poverty is My prison, and disease is My bond therewith I detain whomever I like of My creatures." if it is a disease, it would detain from tyranny and committing sins; and which good is better than it? But even, the good health is to abstain from sins and mistakes. A Gnostic said to a man: "How have you been?" he said: "I have been in good health." He said: "If you have not disobeyed Allah Almighty, you then are in good health; and if you have disobeyed Him, then, which disease is more destructive than disobedience? Not healthy is he who disobeys Allah Almighty."

Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said when he saw the adornment made by those of Nabath in Iraq on the day of Id: "What is that which they did?" they said to him: "O Commander of Believers! That is a day of Id belonging to

them." On that he said: "Everyday on which we do not disobey Allah Almighty is an Id for us."

Allah Almighty said: "and disobeyed it after He brought you in sight (of the Booty) which you covet." (Al Imran 152)

﴿ وَعَصَيْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَرَىٰكُم ﴾

It is said that it refers to the health and wellbeing. He further said: "Nay, but man does transgress all bounds, In that he looks upon himself as self-sufficient." (Al-'Alaq 6-7)

﴿ كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَيَطْغَىٰٓ ۝ أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰٓ ﴾

I.e. if he is self-sufficient with health.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Remember more often (death which is) the destroyer of pleasures." (At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Allah Almighty said: "See they not that they are tried every year once or twice? Yet they turn not in repentance, and they take no heed." (At-Tawbah 126)

﴿ أَوَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُفْتَنُونَ فِى كُلِّ عَامٍ مَّرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لَا يَتُوبُونَ وَلَا هُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴾

It is said that they are tried with ailments and diseases,

It is said that if a man falls ill twice and does not turn to Allah in repentance, the angel of death says to him: "O heedless man! A messenger after a messenger from me has come to you, and you gave no response."

For this reason, the righteous predecessors disliked that a year should elapse without their suffering from ailment in their body or shortage in their property. They said that a believer could hardly be free from being befallen by a terror or a disaster at least every forty days. In this respect, it is narrated that Ammar Ibn Yasir "Allah be pleased with him" married a woman who never fell ill, thereupon he divorced her. It is further narrated that a woman was offered to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and he intended to marry her because of her good qualities described to him, and when it was said to him: "And she has never fallen ill", he "peace be upon him" said: "Then, I have no need for her." (This is reported by Ahmad on the authority of Anas).

Once, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" made a mention of ailments and pains like headache, etc, thereupon a man asked: "What is the headache? Indeed, I have never experienced it." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Keep away from me! Whoever likes to have a glance of one from among the denizens of the fire, let him look at so and so." (Abu Dawud). That is because it is narrated that "Fever is the portion of every believer from the fire (of Hell)." (Al-Bazzar and Ahmad on the authority of A'ishah; Ahmad on the authority of Abu Umamah; At-Tabarani on the authority of Anas; and Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas and A'ishah "Allah be pleased with them" that it was said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace

be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! Would there be anyone else in the same position of martyrs?" he said: "Yes, whoever remembers death twenty times a day" or according to another version: "He who remembers his sins and grieves for them." No doubt, the patient remembers death more often than the ordinary man. Thus, when the benefits of ailment are numerous, a set of people saw it better not to seek to remove it. They saw abstention from medicine a means of superiority, whereas taking medicine a shortage. But how should it be regarded shortage given that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did it?

Refutation Of The Claim That Leaving Medicine Is Better In All States

It might be argued that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did it only in order to be enacted for others than him, otherwise, it is the state of the weak, and the degree of the powerful requires them to be reliant by leaving medicine at all. In reply to that, let me say that this means that it is requisite for a reliant to abstain from cupping and bloodletting when blood erupts and boils in the body, as well as to leave the scorpion and female-snake bite the body without even attacking or averting it from him. But this should apply to hunger, thirst and cold/heat, for which the reliant should not take food, drink or clothes to satisfy it. Therefore, none adopts that argument. There is no difference between those, for all of those causes are organized and manipulated by Allah Almighty, the Causer of causes.

What confirms the fact that this is not requisite for reliance is the narration from Umar and companions "Allah be pleased with them" concerning the story of the plague. When they aimed at Sham and arrived at Jabiyah, the news of the plague reached them. The people were divided into two divisions: Some said: "We never enter upon the plague and contribute in the destruction of ourselves." Others said: "No, let's enter and rely on Allah Almighty, and do not flee away from the fate of Allah Almighty, nor escape from death, thereby we become like those in connection with whom Allah Almighty said: "Did you not turn your vision to those who abandoned their homes, though they were thousands (in number), for fear of death?" (Al-Baqarah 243)

﴿ ۞ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ﴾

They returned to Umar "Allah be pleased with him" and asked him about his opinion, thereupon he said: "Let's return and enter not upon the plague." Those who had a different opinion said: "Should we flee away from the fate of Allah Almighty?" Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Yes, we should flee away from the fate of Allah to the fate of Allah." Then, he set forth an example for them: "Tell me: if anyone of you has cattle and sheep and descends a valley of two sides: one fertile and the other infertile. Tell me: if he pastures them in the fertile one, would he not do so by the fate of Allah Almighty? If he pastures them in the infertile one, would he not do so by the

fate of Allah Almighty?" they answered in the affirmative. Then, he asked for Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf "Allah be pleased with him" to seek his verdict, and he was absent at that time. In the morning Abd-Ar-Rahman "Allah be pleased with him" came to him and he asked him about his opinion, thereupon he said: "O Commander of Believers! I have something I heard from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"." Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Allah is Greater." Abd-Ar-Rahman "Allah be pleased with him" resumed: "I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "If you hear about the plague in a land, do not enter it; and if it emerges in a land in which you are, do not come out in flight from it." Umar "Allah be pleased with him" rejoiced and praised Allah that this agreed with his opinion. Thus, he returned with the people from Jabiyah. (Al-Bukhari)

Then, if that is requisite for reliance, how did all the companions "Allah be pleased with them" leave reliance unanimously, given that it is one of the highest stations in religion?

You may argue: "Then, why was it forbidden to leave the land in which the plague emerges in flight from it, given that the medical cause of infection is the air, and the best way to get medicine is to leave the unclean air? Here, it is permissible to leave reliance." In reply to that, let me say, and Allah Almighty knows best, that the harm does not lie in the air's direct touching the body in so much as in inhaling it regularly for a long time. The putrefied air enters into the lungs and starts to damage them, and the apparent trace of the plague does not emerge unless the inside is damaged. So, leaving the land in which the plague emerges does not save the body from its traces, which would appear some time later. Salvation here is illusive, like cauterization and charming.

Nevertheless, if this is abstracted, it might seem to contradict reliance. But it is not forbidden in itself in so much as for the fact that if all the healthy are given permission to come out, there remains in the land none but the patient, who are afflicted with the plague: Who then should take care of them and look after their affairs? However, if the healthy remain in the land, their stay does not mean decisive death; and if they come out, their departure does not mean decisive salvation from death, given that their departure accelerates the death and destruction of the infected ones, in opposition to the principle that Muslims are like the building whose parts straighten each other; And the believers are like one body: If a member of it falls ill, all the remaining members call each other to share it.

That is the reason given to the forbiddance. It applies to him who has not entered the town in which the plague emerged, whom the air has not yet affected, nor are the inhabitants of the town in need of him. But even, if remains only the plagued in the town, who come to be in need of such as takes care of them, in this case, it might be favorable for those outside to enter upon them, simply for the sake of care and aid. It should not be forbidden for it is an exposure to a harm in the hope of averting a further

harm from the Muslims. For this reason, the flight from plague is likened to the flight from the battlefield in many narrations, for it breaks the hearts of Muslims and hastens on to destroy them. (Ahmad on the authority of A'ishah and Jabir).

Those are subtle matters, and whoever observes them not and rather takes heed of the apparent side of the narrations and traditions, what seems contradictory to him would be more than what he hears. The mistakes of worshippers and ascetics in this issue are numerous. But it is for the sake of this that the honor and excellence of knowledge are.

You may argue: "Since there is excellence in leaving medicine, then, why did the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" not leave medicine for the sake of its excellence on the one hand, and to get the reward for that on the other hand?" in reply to that, let me say that it really is excellent but for him who has so many sins and he needs expiation for them; or him who fears on himself the tyranny of health and prevalence of desires; or him who needs what always reminds him of death as he is possessed by heedlessness; or him who needs to get the reward of the patient for his shortage of attaining the stations of the contented and reliant; or him who falls short of perceiving the benefits and advantages placed by Allah in the medicine, so that it becomes illusive in his sight like charming and bad omen; or him whose engagement in his own state prevents him from getting medicine, since medicine occupies him from his state in view of his inability to combine both, to the end of that series.

Those are the causes that impede from getting medicine. Those might be a source of perfection for many, and of shortage for others in the degree of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", whose station is higher than all of those stations. His state required him to be on the same mode concerning the presence or absence of means. That is because in all of his states, he regarded only the Causer of causes and not the causes and means themselves; and whoever is in such a state is not harmed by the means and causes. The desire is shortage, and turning away from wealth is to have aversion for it; and even if it is perfection, it is shortage in the sight of him to whom it is the same to have or lose wealth. To regard both stone and gold with the same eye is more perfect than to flee away from gold. The state of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was like him to whom both gold and stone are equal. He did not keep gold just to instruct the people the station of asceticism, not for fear on himself of keeping it, for he is too high for the world to harm him, given that the entire world with its treasures was offered to him, and he did not accept it.

But at the same time, he did not leave medicine in order to follow the established way of Allah in this respect on the one hand, and to make it permissible for his Ummah to use it when they are in dire need of it on the other hand, given that it is harmless in the end, unlike wealth, which is extremely harmful. It is true that getting medicine does not cause harm except in terms of seeing medicine alone beneficial apart from its creator, and from

this point of view, it is forbidden; and in terms of intending health thereby to seek its aid in committing sins, and this is also forbidden. But fortunately, no believer intends that. None of the believers sees medicine beneficial in itself in so much as being made by Allah Almighty a means of advantage and benefit, just in the same way as he does not see food or drink to quench hunger and thirst in themselves in so much as being made a means to do so by their Creator.

Getting medicine is subject to the same ruling of earning. If one earns to seek its aid to do good or evil, it has its particular ruling; and if he earns to be blessed in what is permissible, it has its particular ruling; and so on.

From what we have mentioned, it has become clear that leaving medicine might be better in some cases, and getting medicine might be better in some cases; and this differs by the difference of persons, states and intentions; and neither doing nor leaving it is requisite for reliance, except for leaving such illusive things as cauterization, charming, omen, etc, which is unfitting for the reliant.

Exposition Of States Of Reliant In Disclosing And Concealing Illness

It should be known to you that concealing illness, and hiding poverty and all kinds of distress and trials are among the treasures of righteousness, and among the highest stations, for the contentment with the judgement and decree of Allah Almighty, and patience on His trials are included in the good treatment with Allah Almighty. To conceal that is safer from evils.

Nevertheless, to disclose that brings about no harm if the intention and purpose therein are true and good. There are three purposes of disclosure:

The first is to want to get medicine, thereupon one needs to make a mention of his ailment to the physician. In this case, he mentions it not by way of making a complaint but by way of describing the power of Allah Almighty on him that is shown in this ailment. Bishr used to describe his pains to Abd-Ar-Rahman the physician. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal used to tell about the ailments he experienced, saying: "I indeed describe the power of Allah on me."

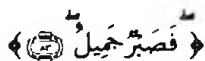
The second is to describe to anyone other than the physician, provided that he is of those followed by others and well-versed in knowledge. By description, he likes that he would learn from him not only the good patience on disease, but also the good gratitude, by disclosing that the ailment is a favor that deserves gratitude, telling about it in the same way as he tells about a favor. According to Al-Hassan Al-Basri: "If the patient praises Allah Almighty and gives thanks to him and then makes a mention of his pains, it would not be a complaint."

The third is to disclose his powerlessness and neediness for Allah Almighty; and that is good from him who is brave and powerful (in relation to the people) and helplessness is unlikely to be expected from him. In this issue, it is narrated that when Ali "Allah be pleased with him" fell ill, he was asked about his state, thereupon he said: "Evil." The attendants looked at each other as if they felt it and thought it to be a complaint, thereupon he said: "I just announce my neediness for Allah Almighty." In this way, he liked to disclose

his powerlessness and neediness for Allah Almighty with the etiquettes with which he was disciplined by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when he heard him saying while being ill: "O Allah! Make me patient on the trial!" on that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "You have asked Allah for trial, then, ask Him for health."

With those intentions, it is permissible to make a mention of disease. But in the absence of that, it turns to be a complaint, and to make a complaint against Allah Almighty is unlawful as I have already mentioned in the prohibition of begging for the poor unless there is a dire necessity. The disclosure turns into a complaint by the presumption of displeasure and showing aversion for the deed of Allah Almighty. If it is void of displeasure, and the intentions we have already mentioned, it would not be unlawful, although it is preferable to leave it, for it might give the false impression of complaint, or ostentatious description of the illness. Anyway, whoever leaves medicine out of reliance, has no right to disclose his disease, for to take rest with medicine is better than to take rest with disclosure.

In interpretation of the statement of Allah Almighty: "So patience is most fitting (for me)" (Yusuf 83)

﴿ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ﴾

It is said that it is a patience in which there is no complaint. It was said to Jacob "peace be upon him": "What has taken away your sight?" He said: "The bitterness of time and long sadness." On that Allah Almighty revealed to him: "He has devoted himself to complain of Me to My servants." He said: "O Lord! I turn to You in repentance."

It is narrated on the authority of Tawus and Mujahid that they said: "Even the moaning of the patient in his illness is written against him." They disliked moaning during illness, for it gives the impression of complaint. It was said in this context: "Iblis, may Allah curse him, got nothing from Job "peace be upon him" except for his moaning during his illness." In this way, the moaning was Iblis's portion from him.

It is narrated: "If a servant falls ill, Allah Almighty reveals to both angels the following: "Consider what he says to his visitors." If he praises Allah and talks with good, they would invoke good upon him; and if he makes a complaint and talks with evil, they would say: "Let it be against you."

For this reason, some worshippers disliked to be visited when they fell ill for fear of complaint. Whenever anyone of them fell ill, he would close his door against the people, and none would come to visit him until he would recover and come out to them. Among those who used to do so, a mention may be made of Fudail, Wuhaib and Bishr.

Fudail used to say: "I desire to remain ill without visitors to come to inquire about my health." He further said: "I dislike ailment only for the sake of visitors." "Allah be pleased with them".

End of Book of Monotheism and Reliance, by aid and good help of Allah Almighty, followed, Allah willing by the Book of Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment.

Book six: Love, longing, intimacy and contentment

It is the sixth book of the quarter of saviors of the revival of religion sciences

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All perfect praise to Allah Almighty Who diverted the hearts of His allies from devotion to the adornment and splendor of this world, and purified their sights form observing none but His presence. Then, He Almighty appeared with Glory to them, with His Names and Attributes until their minds rose with the lights of His gnosis, and revealed to them the lights of His Countenance until their hearts burnt with the fire of love for Him, and then He veiled Himself from them with His Glory until minds wandered in the vast land of His Supremacy and Grandeur.

All blessing and peace of Allah be upon Muhammad, the seal of all the Prophets, and upon his family and companions, the chiefs of all the people, and imams and leaders and guides to the truth.

Coming to the point: the love for Allah Almighty is the farthest degree and the highest station after which there is no station but that it is a fruit and product of it, like longing, intimacy and contentment; as well as there is no station before it but that it is an introductory to it, like repentance, patience, asceticism, etc. Although there is, concerning all stations other than the love for Allah Almighty, in case of their absence, a belief in their availability. But as for the love for Allah Almighty, belief in it is very rare, to the extent that many religious scholars go as far as to deny it, saying: "It has no significance other than the regular obedience of and compliance with the command of Allah Almighty. This is what caused us to reveal the real nature of this matter.

This book will be divided into two parts

Part one: Love, longing and intimacy

In this part, we are going to discuss the following:

The Sharia-based quotations in support of love

Exposition of its real nature and causes

Exposition of the fact that none deserves love other than Allah Almighty

Exposition of the fact that the greatest pleasure is to catch glimpse of His Bounteous Countenance

Exposition of the further pleasure achieved by the vision in the hereafter than the gnosis in this world

Exposition of the causes that strengthen the love for Allah Almighty

Exposition of the people's disparity of their love

Exposition of the cause why understanding falls short of gnosis of Allah Almighty as it should be

Exposition of the significance and meaning of longing

CHAPTER ONE

EXPOSITION OF THE SHARIA-BASED QUOTATIONS IN LOVE OF THE SERVANT FOR ALLAH ALMIGHTY

It should be known to you that there is a consensus among the Ummah that the love for Allah Almighty and His Messenger "peace be upon him" is an obligatory duty. But even, how should what exists be imposed an obligation? How should love be construed as obedience given that obedience is a product and fruit of love? The love should be the first and after that the lover would give obedience. That love is affirmed to Allah Almighty is attested from His statement: “whom He will love as they will love Him.” (Al-Ma’idah 54)

﴿ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ ﴾

And: “ but those of Faith are more overflowing in their love for Allah.” (Al-Baqarah 165)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ﴾

That is an indication to affirm love on the one hand, and prove disparity in it on the other hand.

There are many narrations in which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" made the love for Allah Almighty requisite for faith. It is narrated that Abu Razin Al-Uqaili asked him "peace be upon him" saying: “O Messenger of Allah! What is faith?” He "peace be upon him" said: “It is that Allah and His Messenger become dearer to you than anyone else.” (Ahmad).

He "peace be upon him" said in another Hadith: “None of you shall have faith (complete) until Allah and His Messenger become dearer to him than anyone else.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas).

He "peace be upon him" said in another Hadith: “No servant shall have faith (perfect) until I become dearer to him than his family, property and children.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas).

why not since Allah Almighty said in His Holy Book: “Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline; or the dwellings in which you delight - are dearer to you than Allah, Or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause - then wait until Allah brings about His decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious.” (At-Tawbah 24)

﴿ قُلْ إِن كَانَ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلٌ ٱقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَٰرَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ
كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَٰكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَآ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَجِهَادٍ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ فَتَرَبَّصُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ ٱللَّهُ

بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" ordered people to love Allah saying: "Love Allah for His favors He provides you with, and love me for the love of Allah for me." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

It is narrated that a man said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! I love you." He "peace be upon him" said: "Then, get ready for poverty." He further said: "I love Allah Almighty." On that he "peace be upon him" said: "Then, get ready for trial." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mughaffal).

It is narrated on the authority of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" looked at Mus'ab Ibn Umair coming and he had a hide of ram with which he wrapped his waist, thereupon he "peace be upon him" said: "Look at that man whose heart Allah has illuminated. I saw him with his parents seducing him with the most pleasant food, but the love for Allah and His Messenger "peace be upon him" invited him to such (a state) as you see." (Abu Na'im in his Hilyah).

It is narrated in a famous Hadith that Abraham "peace be upon him", said to the angel of death when he came to take his soul: "Have you seen a bosom friend sending his bosom friend to death?" Allah Almighty revealed to him: "Have you seen a lover disliking to meet his beloved?" on that Abraham "peace be upon him" said: "O angel of death! Now then take my soul." None but a servant who loves Allah from the depth of his heart could do so. If he learns that death is the cause of his meeting with his beloved, he would hasten to it. In confirmation of that our Prophet "peace be upon him" said in his supplication: "O Allah! Endow me with Your Love, and the Love for such as brings me close to You, and make Your love dearer to me than the cold water."

It is further narrated that a Bedouin came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Messenger of Allah! When will the Hour (of Judgement) be?" The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "What have you prepared for it?" he said: "Indeed, I have not prepared for it much prayers or fasts, except that I love Allah and His Messenger." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "The man would be in the company of whomever he loves." Anas "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I have never seen the Muslims happy with anything after embracing Islam more than they were with that (statement of the Prophet)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas).

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Whoever tastes the love of Allah Almighty, it occupies him from the pursuit of this world, and lets him keep aloof from all the people." According to Al-Hassan "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Whoever knows his Lord loves him, and whoever knows this world abstains from it; and the faithful believer is not amused until he becomes heedless, and once he meditates, he grieves." According to Abu

Sulaiman Ad-Darani “may Allah have mercy upon him”: “From among the creation of Allah Almighty, there are such as whom even Paradise with the pleasures and delights it contains never diverts from Him: then, how should they be occupied from Him by this world?”

It is narrated that Jesus "peace be upon him" came upon three persons whose bodies grew lean and the color of their faces turned pale, thereupon he asked them: “What has caused you to reach such a state as I see?” They said: “The fear of the fire (of Hell).” He said: “It is incumbent upon Allah to secure the fearful.” Then, he left them and came upon other three whose body were more lean and the color of their faces more pale, whom he asked: “What has caused you to reach such a state as I see?” they said: “The longing for Paradise.” He said: “It is incumbent upon Allah to give you what you hope for.” Then he left them and came upon other three whose bodies were more lean and the color of their faces changed as if they were mirrors because of light, thereupon he asked them: “What has caused you to reach such a state as I see?” they said: “We love Allah Almighty.” On that he said to them: “You are these brought close to Allah! You are these brought close to Allah! You are these brought close to Allah!”

Abd-Al-Wahid Ibn Zaid said: I came upon a man standing in the ice thereupon I asked him: “Do you not sense cold?” He said: “Whomever the love of Allah occupies never senses cold.” It is narrated that Sari As-Saqati said: “On the Day of Judgement, the different nations would be called by their Prophets "peace be upon them" saying: “O nation of Moses! O nation of Jesus! O nation of Muhammad”, except for the lovers of Allah Almighty, who would be called as “O allies of Allah! Come to Allah Almighty.” At that time, their hearts would almost burst out of joy.” According to Haram Ibn Hayyan: “If the faithful believer knows his Lord Almighty, he loves Him; and once he loves Him, he turns to Him wholeheartedly; and once he tastes the sweetness of turning to Him, he would not look at the world with the eye of desire, nor to the hereafter with the eye of regret.”

According to Yahya Ibn Mu’adh: “His (Allah’s) forgiveness absorbs sins, what do you think about His good pleasure? And His good pleasure absorbs all hopes, what do you think about His love? And His love astonishes minds, then, what do you think about His affection? And His affection causes one to forget anything else, then, what do you think about His kindness?” According to a Scripture: “O My servant! By your right, I love you. So, by My right on you, love Me.” According to Yahya Ibn Mu’adh once again: “As little as a mustard seed of love is dearer to me than worship for as long as seventy years without love.” he further said: “O my God! I am standing at your courtyard, engaged in Your praise. You have taken me to Your presence since I was still young, dressed me in the dress of Your gnosis, made me well-established in Your kindness, and moved and turned me between different deeds: Screening and repentance, asceticism and longing, love and contentment, letting me drink from the springs of Your fountains, and graze in Your gardens, and I am adherent to Your command and concerned with Your statement.”

However, the narrations about the love for Allah Almighty are beyond calculation, and this is apparent. What is abstruse in this issue is to clarify its meaning. So, let's engage in it.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPOSITION OF REAL NATURE AND CAUSES OF LOVE FOR ALLAH; AND VERIFICATION OF THE SERVANT'S LOVE FOR ALLAH ALMIGHTY

It should be known to you that the purpose of that chapter is achieved only by exposition of the real nature of love in itself, and then of its conditions and causes, and then consideration of its significance as regards Allah Almighty.

The first principle: the point to clarify here is that no love is imagined before knowledge and perception. Man could love only what he knows. For this reason, love is characteristic of the living perceptive organism, apart from the non-living being. On the other hand, the perceptibles are divided into what agrees with, befits and pleases the perceiver, what disagrees with, opposes and pains the perceiver, and what is neutral in effect on him. The perceiver loves all that is pleasing and comfortable in perception, and hates all that is painful in perception, and what is neutral is neither loved nor hated. This means that what is pleasant is lovable in the sight of him who is delighted and pleased with it. That it is lovable means that there is inclination to it by disposition, whereas that it is hateful means that there is disinclination from it by disposition. Love is an inclination by disposition to a pleasant thing, and if that inclination is confirmed and strengthened, it is called attachment. On the other extreme, dislike is a disinclination by disposition from a troublesome painful thing, and if it is strengthened it is called abomination. That is the first principle of the meaning of love.

The second principle: as love follows perception and knowledge, it is divided in accordance with the division of the perceptibles and senses themselves. Each sense perceives a kind of perceptibles, and each has its certain pleasure, because of which the nature inclines to, and henceforth loves it. The pleasure of the eye lies in seeing and perceiving the beautiful things and good pleasant and nice-to-see pictures and images; the pleasure of the ear lies in the good harmonious tunes; the pleasure of smelling lies in the good pleasant smells; the pleasure of taste lies in the delicious flavors; and the pleasure of touching lies in smoothness and softness.

Since those perceptibles are pleasant, they are loved. That is, the sound nature inclines to them. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Three things of your world have been made lovable to me: Perfume and women, and the comfort of my eye has been made in prayer." (An-Nasa'i on the authority of Anas). Perfume was included among the lovable things, although neither the eye nor the ear has a portion in it. Similarly, women were enlisted among the lovable things although only the eye and touching, apart from smelling, hearing and tasting, have a portion in them. The prayer was called the comfort of the eye and made the best among the lovable things, although none of the five senses has a portion in it. But there is a sixth sense whose source is the heart, and none perceives it but him

who has a sound heart.

Animals share man in the five senses. But if love is restricted to the five senses, to the extent that it is said that since Allah Almighty is not perceived by anyone of the five senses, nor is He imaged in imagination, He then is not loved, then, the characteristic of man and the sixth sense that distinguishes him from all living beings would become invalid. That sixth sense is expressed by mind, heart, light, or by any such thing. To be sure, the internal insight is stronger than the apparent sight, and the heart is more perceptive than the eye, and the beauty of the meaning perceived by the mind is greater than the beauty of the apparent images visible to the sights. Thus, the pleasure of the heart it receives from perception of the Divine noble matters which the five senses fail to perceive, is more perfect and impressive, and it causes the sound nature and mind to incline to them more. There is no significance for love but to incline to that whose perception brings about pleasure, as will be shown later. None then denies the love for Allah Almighty except him whose shortage keeps him in the rank of animals, and does not go beyond the perception of the five senses.

The third principle: It is not hidden that man loves himself, and it is not hidden too that he might love others for his own sake. It is not imagined that he could love anyone else for his sake apart from the lover's own sake. That is abstruse on the weak persons who think that it is not imagined that man could love anyone else for his sake unless there is a certain benefit to return to the lover himself more than his self-perception. In fact, this is possible. So, let's explicate the reasons and divisions of love.

The first beloved in the sight of every living being is his own self. That he loves himself means that he inclines, by disposition, to his survival, and disinclines from his annihilation and destruction. That is because the beloved is that which befits the lover, and which thing is more fitting than his own self and his own survival? And which thing is more unfitting and disgusting than his annihilation and destruction? For this reason, man loves to survive, and dislikes to die or be killed, not for fear of what he might receive after death, nor for fear of death agonies, for were he to be snatched by death without pain nor punishment nor reward, he would not accept it. None loves death, nonexistence and annihilation but for the suffering and pain he receives in his life. If he is put to trial, what he loves is to remove that trial. So, he loves death, he indeed does not love it because it is nonexistence in so much as because it removes the trial from him. Thus, destruction and nonexistence are hateful, whereas survival and existence are lovable. That is instinctive in human nature, according to the established way of Allah Almighty, and "no change will you find in the established way (approved) of Allah." (Al-Ahzab 62)

﴿ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ تَبۡدِيلٗا ﴾

Thus, **the first** thing man loves is his own self, then the soundness of his organs and parts of his body, then his children, property, relatives, kith and kin, clan, friends, etc. the organs and parts of body are lovable, and their soundness is required, for the perfection of survival and permanent existence

depend on them. Property is lovable for it is an instrument of the permanent and perfect existence, and the same is true of all causes and means. Man then loves those things not for their sake in so much as for the fact that his perfect and permanent existence is suspended on them.

He loves his child, even if no portion from him returns to him, and tolerates the difficulties for him, simply because he is to succeed him in existence after his destruction and turning into nonexistence. His offspring are a continuation of his existence. Because he loves to survive, he loves the survival of him who would exist on his behalf as if he were a part of him when he fails to survive any longer. It is true that if he is given the freedom to choose the killing of him or the killing of his child, he would give preference to his own survival over the survival of his child, for the survival of his child resembles his own survival in one point, but it is not really his own survival. The same is true of his love for his clan and kith and kin, which goes back to his love for the perfection of himself. He sees himself powerful and perfect with their great number. To be sure, the clan, kith and kin, property, and all the other external causes are like the wing that completes man, and the perfection and permanence of existence are inevitably and necessarily lovable.

Thus, the first beloved to any living being is his own self, the perfection and permanent existence of his own self; and what he dislikes is the opposite of all that. That is the first cause.

The second cause: Doing good. Man is a servant of the doing of good, and the hearts have been predisposed to love these who do good to them and dislike these who do evil to them. In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “O Allah! Cause not me to be under obligation to a wicked or a disbeliever lest my heart would love him.” (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Mu’adh). He indeed refers to the fact that one loves the person who does favor to him, and he loves him by force in such a way as he could not but do so. It is an inclination by predisposition which one has no power to change. By that cause, man might love him who is foreign to him, although there is no relationship between them.

However, this goes back to the first cause, since the doer of good is he who provides another with wealth, aid and all means that help in the survival, permanence and perfection of existence. But there is a difference here: The organs and parts of body are loved because with them his existence and survival are realized, whereas the doer of good is but one of the means to that perfect existence, just like the physician which might be a means to the health and soundness of the organs and parts of body. There is difference between the love for the health and the love for the physician who is the cause of that health, for the health is required for itself, whereas the physician is loved for he is the means to that health. The same is true of knowledge and teacher: Knowledge is loved for itself, whereas the teacher is loved for he is the means to that loved knowledge. Food and drink are loved, and Dinars also are loved. But food and drink are loved for themselves, whereas Dinars are loved for

they are a means to them.

The third cause: To love a thing for itself and not for a portion or a fortune to get from it. That is the real and extensive love whose permanence is reliable. It is like the love for beauty and prettiness. Every beautiful and pretty is loved for itself by the perceiver of beauty and prettiness, for pleasure lies in the perception of beauty and prettiness, and the pleasure is loved for itself and not for anything else. Think not that the love for the beautiful pictures is imagined only to fulfill the desire, for fulfilling the desire is another pleasure for which the beautiful pictures might be loved, and the perception of the beauty itself is pleasant and thus it might be loved for that.

Why not since greenery and current water are loved not to eat the greenery nor to drink the water? No portion but vision one has in them. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to admire greenery and current water. It is characteristic of the sound natures and healthy dispositions to get pleasure in looking at lights, flowers, and birds of good colours and harmonious forms. In so many cases, one finds release from his distresses by looking at such sceneries and landscapes.

Those causes are pleasant, and every pleasure is loved. Furthermore, the perception of every beauty and prettiness brings about pleasure. No one denies that the beauty is loved by disposition. Since it is proved that Allah Almighty is beautiful, He should be loved by him to whom His beauty and Glory are revealed. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty." (Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

The fourth principle: Exposition of the meaning of beauty and prettiness. It should be known to you that the one who is detained in the limited sphere of fancies and sensible things might think that the beauty has no significance other than the harmony of character and form, and the good and pleasant colour. The beauty, for the most part, is judged by sight, and people more often care for the form of the man. They think that what is not visible or imagined is not beautiful. Since its beauty is not imagined, then, there is no pleasure in perceiving it, which means that it is not loved.

But even, that is a clear mistake. Beauty is not restricted to the visibles, nor to the harmony of forms and colours. We say, for instance, that is a good handwriting, that is a good voice, and that is a good horse. We also say, that is a good dress, and that is a good utensil. Which meaning then lies in the beauty of the handwriting, voice, and all the other things, if we limit beauty only to the picture and form? It is a well-known fact that the eye gets pleasure in looking at the handwriting, the ear in listening to the good and sweet tones. All the perceptibles are divided into what is good and what is ugly. What is the meaning of beauty in which all those things share?

We should look for it. But it would take too long to do that search which is, anyway, unfitting for the science of practical religion. So, let us say, with frankness, that the beauty of everything lies in its being fittingly and possibly perfect. If it is entirely perfect, it would be in the highest degree of beauty. If

only some of its parts are perfect, its portion of beauty is determined by the extent of the perfect parts in it. The good horse is that which combines all that is fitting for a horse in terms of good appearance, stature, colour, good running, ease of attacking and escaping on it; and the good handwriting is that which combines all that is fitting for the handwriting, in terms of the harmony, arrangement and good order of letters; and so on. Everything has its perfection that is fitting for it. Thus, the beauty of anything lies in its perfection that is fitting for it. Of course, the elements of beauty and prettiness of the man differ from those of the beauty and prettiness of the horse; and the elements of beauty and prettiness of the handwriting differ from those of the beauty and prettiness of the voice; and the elements of the beauty and prettiness of the utensil differ from those of the beauty and prettiness of the clothes; and so on.

But even, you may argue: "It is true that those things are not perceived by the sight, they, therefore, could not be perceived but by anyone of the five senses. They, by that consideration, are among the sensibles, and the beauty of sensibles is not deniable, nor is the pleasure by perceiving their beauty and prettiness, for this is denied only in the insensible things."

In reply, it should be known to you that beauty and prettiness lie also in the insensible. It is said, for example, that is a good moral character, that is a good knowledge, that is a good conduct, those are good and beautiful manners, etc. The good and beautiful manners are intended to combine knowledge, mind, piety, chastity, bravery, generosity, to the end of those good attributes. None of those attributes is perceived by the five senses, in so much as by the light of the internal insight. Therefore, all those good attributes are loved, and the one who has them is also loved accordingly by him who knows well his characteristics and qualities.

The sign of that is that natures are predisposed to love the Prophets "peace be upon them", the Companions "Allah be pleased with them", although they did not see them. Furthermore, they are inclined to love the men of four juristic schools like Ash-Shafi'i, Malik, Abu Hanifah and Ahmad "may Allah have mercy upon them" to the extent that one might go in his love as far as to spend his entire wealth in support of the school of jurisprudence whose leader he loves, and exposes himself to danger in fighting such as criticizes or tries to find fault with that leader or imam whom he follows.

Anyone of those who love Ash-Shafi'i "may Allah have mercy upon him", for example, did not see him, and even if they saw him, he might not seem good-looking to them. However, what causes them to love him is his internal and not external image, for his external image turned into dust in the earth. They love him then for his internal attributes of religiousness, piety, abundance of knowledge, chastity, and his eagerness and endeavor to benefit the science of Sharia and jurisprudence, and publicize those good things in the world. Those are beautiful matters whose beauty and prettiness could be perceived only by the light of the internal insight, of which the five senses are short.

The same is true of him who loves Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" and gives him preference over anyone else among the people; or of him who loves Ali "Allah be pleased with him" and gives him preference, and shows fanaticism for him: he loves them only for he regards as good their internal images of knowledge, religiousness, piety, chastity, bravery, generosity, to the end of this series of the good attributes and qualities. It is well known that whoever loves As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" does not love his flesh, bones, skin, limbs and form in general, since all of this perished by his death. But he loves him for the very thing that remained therewith As-Siddiq gained the quality of being truthful, i.e. the praiseworthy attributes which are the sources of the good conduct. Thus, love survives with the survival of those attributes, although all external forms and images disappear.

All those attributes go back to both knowledge and power. That is, one knows the real nature of things and then has power to force himself to them by oppressing his desires. All good characteristics depend on those two attributes, which are beyond the perception of senses, although they are inseparable part of the body, and it is that part which is the real beloved. That inseparable part has no form, nor features, nor a colour to seem to the sight in order to be loved for that. Beauty lies in the conduct, and in the absence of knowledge and insight, that good conduct would not be loved. What is really loved is the source of that good conduct, i.e. the praiseworthy good manners and noble virtues, which go back, in total, to the perfect knowledge and power, which are loved by nature, although they are not perceived by senses.

If we like to endear an absent or a dead to a child, for example, our sole way to do so is to exaggerate in praising him and ascribing all good qualities and attributes to him, and once the child believes that, he could not help love him. The Companions "Allah be pleased with them" were loved whereas people like Abu Jahl were hated only by means of exaggeration in describing the good and bad attributes, which are not perceived by senses. When the people described Hatim At-Ta'i with generosity, and Khalid Ibn Al-Walid "Allah be pleased with him" with bravery, the people loved them because of those good attributes, although they did not see them with their own eyes, nor did they covet of any fortune to get from them. If it is related from a particular king anywhere in the land that he is just and kind to his subjects, the people would love him, although they do not covet of getting any portion of his good or kindness.

This means that man does not love only him who does good or favor to him. The doer of good in himself is loved although his good might not reach the lover. That is because every beauty and prettiness is loved in itself. Beauty and prettiness combine both the external and internal images. The external images are perceived by the external sight, whereas the internal images by the internal insight. Whoever is deprived of the internal insight could not perceive by it, nor get pleasure in it, nor love nor incline to it. Whoever is possessed by the internal insight more than the external sight, he inclines more to love the

internal meanings than the external meanings. How great the difference is between him who loves a picture inscribed on the wall, whose beauty lies in its external form, and him who loves one of the Prophets "peace be upon them" for the beauty of his internal image.

The fifth cause: the hidden relevance between the beloved and the lover. It may be that two persons love each other not because of beauty or prettiness, nor because of any fortune or the like of it, but just because there is a kind of harmony between their souls. In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Souls are mobilized soldiers: Those from amongst them who are familiar to each other (in the heaven) would have affinity with one another (in the world) and those from amongst them who opposed each other (in the Heaven) would also be at odds (in the world)." [Muslim] we have previously explained that in the Book of the Etiquettes of Companionship.

In sum, there are five causes of love: the man's love for his perfect and permanent existence; His love for him who does good or favor to him, that helps him survive and avert harm from himself; His love for him who does good in general, even though his good does not reach him; his love for what is beautiful and pretty in itself, whether its beauty lies in its external or internal image; and his love for the one due to a hidden relevance between them. If all those causes gather in a man, the love for him increases in degree and strength, like a son who combines beautiful features, good moral character, perfect knowledge, good manipulation, who always does good to others, and is kind to his parents: He would be extremely loved. No doubt, the strength and degree of love are determined by the strength, perfection and presence of all or some of those attributes.

On the other hand, it is not imagined that all those causes gather in perfection but in Allah Almighty. For this reason, none deserves the real love but Allah Almighty.

CHAPTER THREE
EXPOSITION OF THE FACT THAT NONE DESERVES LOVE OTHER THAN ALLAH ALMIGHTY ALONE

It should be known to you that Whoever loves anyone else other than Allah Almighty not for the sake of Allah does so because of his ignorance or shortage; and that the love for the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" is praiseworthy for it is a part of the love for Allah Almighty; and the same is true of the religious scholars and pious for the beloved of the beloved should be loved, the messenger of the beloved should be loved, and the lover of the beloved should be loved. All of this goes back to the love for the primal One and does not go beyond Him. There is no beloved, in the sight of those endued with deep insights, other than Allah Almighty, and none deserves love other than Him.

To clarify this, we should go back to the five causes we have previously mentioned, and show that they never gather together with perfection in anyone other than Him Almighty, and anyone else has only one or two of them.

Furthermore, they are real for Allah Almighty, and allegorically imagined for anyone else, for which there is no reality. Once that is revealed, what would seem evident is the opposite of what is imagined by the weak-minded, that it is impossible to love Allah Almighty in reality, and that verification requires to love in reality none other than Allah Almighty.

As for the first cause, i.e. the man's love for himself, his perfect and permanent survival and existence, and aversion for what destroys or threatens to exterminate his existence and perfection, that is the predisposition of every living being, and none is imagined to do the opposite of that. But even, that requires the utmost degree of love for Allah Almighty. Whoever knows himself well, and knows Allah Almighty becomes certain that he could never bring himself into existence by himself: but his existence, i.e. permanent and perfect survival is dependent upon, from, to and by Allah Almighty. He is the Inventor of him, Who brings him into existence, and causes him to survive, and his existence to be perfect, by creating for him the attributes of perfection, and the means to attain them.

In total, nothing in the existence could survive by itself other than Allah, the Self-Subsisting, the Eternal, Who survives by Himself, and anything else survives by Him. If one loves himself, and his existence is caused by another than him, of a surety, he necessarily loves the causer of his existence. If he does not love Him, that is due to his ignorance of himself and of his Lord. Love is the fruit of knowledge: it exists by its existence, disappears by its disappearance, becomes strong and weak by its strength and weakness. That is the significance of the statement of Al-Hassan Al-Basri "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Whoever knows his Lord should necessarily love Him; and whoever knows this world should necessarily abstain in it."

How should it be imaginable that a man would love himself and not his Lord, upon Whom his own survival depends? It is well-known that the one tried with the scorching heat of sun loves the shade, and along with it loves the trees with which it is made. All that is in existence, in comparison with the power of Allah Almighty, is like the shade in comparison with the trees, and the light in comparison with the sun. All things result from His power, and their existence follows His existence, in the same way as the existence of the light follows the existence of the sun, and the existence of the shade follows the existence of the trees.

If one should necessarily love himself, he should, more inevitably, love Him Who sustains his existence and perfect survival. Whoever lacks that love does so because he engages in himself and his own desires from his Lord and Creator, and does not know Him as He should be known, and rather restricts his vision to his desires and sensibles, i.e. the world of the visibles in which animals share him, apart from the dominion of invisibles, which none tramples but he who is closer to the angels: He sees from it as much as he is close in his attributes and qualities to the angels, and falls short of it as much as he is far from them, and rather close to the world of the animals.

As for the second cause, i.e. that one loves such as does good to him, is

kind to him, consoles him with his wealth and good words, provides for his aid, hastens to support and help him, averts evil and harm from him, gives him a means to attain of fortunes what is beneficial and advantageous to him, his children and relatives, he should inevitably be loved. This very fact requires that one should love none but Allah Almighty. If he knows Him as He should be known, he would learn that the real doer of good to him is only Allah Almighty. His favors He does to all of His servants are too numerous to measure or calculate, as confirmed by Allah Almighty in His statement: "And He gives you of all that you ask for. But if you count the favours of Allah, never will you be able to number them." (Ibrahim 34)

﴿وَءَاتَىٰكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ﴾

We have already referred to something of that in the Book of Gratitude. But now, let's limit ourselves to explicate that the doing of good on the part of the people is unimaginable except with allegory, for the real and sole doer of good is Allah Almighty.

Suppose that somebody confers a favor upon you by making available to you all of his treasures and putting them under your disposal: Of a surety, you think that this doing of good is from his own. That is wrong. The good he has done to you has been achieved by His (Allah's) power, with the help of His wealth and property, and as a result of the motive He created in him to give you that wealth. Who has given the favor of creating him, creating his property and wealth for him, and creating his power and will to do so? Who has endeared you to him, caused him to turn in love to you, and made him believe that the rectitude of his religion and world lies in his doing good to you? Had it not been for all of that, surely, he would have given you nothing of his wealth.

But when Allah Almighty causes him to give you, and makes him believe that the rectitude of his religion and world lies in giving you out of his wealth, he then is forced to surrender to the will of Allah Almighty, and not to oppose it even in the least. The real doer of good then is He Who forces him and subjugates him to you, and causes him to give you. His hand is but a medium through which the good of Allah Almighty reaches you. The man of the hand is forced to do so in the same way as the watercourse is forced to be ready for the water to run in it. If you think he is a doer of good, or give thanks to him for his doing good to you in terms of his being a real doer of good and not merely a medium, you then are ignorant of the truth of the matter.

Doing good on the part of the man is unimaginable but to himself. But to do good to another is impossible from a creature to a creature like him, for one does not give his wealth but for a certain purpose that is to serve his own benefit. That benefit might be later like the reward in the hereafter, or sooner like to make reminder of generosity, subjugate others in his service, gain praise and gratitude from others, get fame for generosity and spending, or attract the hearts of people to obey and have love for him. As well as man does not throw his wealth into the ocean, since he has no benefit to get from that, he also does not throw it into the hand of another unless there is a certain benefit to get from that. That benefit is

his purpose he seeks for and pursues.

As for you, you are not his purpose and your hand is no more than an instrument of receiving until he gets his purpose of praise, gratitude, or reward because of your receiving the money. Thus, he subjugates you to receive the money in order for him to achieve his purpose. He then is a doer of good to himself, and is recompensed for what he gives of wealth, and that recompense, in his sight, overweighs the money he gives, and had it not been preponderant, he would not have given up his wealth to you.

Thus, he deserves neither gratitude nor love from two points of view:

One is that he is forced, by Allah's investing motives with authority over him to do so, and has no power to oppose that will. He is in the position of the king's treasurer: He does not render himself a doer of good by giving the king's gift to him to whom it is assigned, for he is forced to obey and comply with the commands of the king, and has no power to oppose his order. However, if the king lets him be to himself, he would not give anything of that to anyone. Similarly, the same is true of every doer of good: if Allah Almighty lets him be to himself, he would give nothing of his property to anyone, until Allah invests motives with authority over him, and causes him to believe that his good fortune from religion and world lies in giving his wealth, and it is only for this that he gives.

The other is that the recompense he gets in substitution for what he gives is better and dearer in his sight than what he really gives. As well as the seller is not regarded a doer of good because of what he gives for a compensation which is dearer to him than what he gives, similarly, the grantor is recompensed with the reward, praise or gratitude, or any such compensation. It is not requisite for the compensation to be in the form of money or priced thing. No doubt, all fortunes are regarded as compensations, in comparison with which all items of wealth and commodities are insignificant.

Doing good lies in generosity, and generosity is to give wealth with no compensation nor fortune to return to the giver; and that is impossible except in relation to Allah Almighty. It is He Who confers favors upon the worlds out of doing good to them, and for their sake, with no fortune nor compensation to return to Him. In this way, the pleasure of generosity and doing good in relation to anyone else other than Him is false, or at least allegoric. It is, in relation to anyone else other than Him, as impossible as to combine both whiteness and blackness. Generosity and doing good are unique to Him Alone. If one should, by nature, love the doer of good, then, the Gnostic should not love but Allah Almighty, since doing of good from anyone else other than Him is impossible. It is He Alone Who deserves that love. Anyone else deserves love for doing of good provided that one is ignorant of the meaning and real nature of doing good.

As for the third cause, i.e. to love the doer of good in himself even if his good does not reach you, that is natural. If the news of a just worshipping good king who is kind to his subjects reaches you, and his kingdom is far from you, and the news of another wrongful wicked, arrogant and harsh king

reaches you, whose kingdom is far from you, of a surety, you would, by disposition, incline to the former in love, and disincline from the latter in aversion, given that you have no hope of the good of the former, and are safe from the evil of the latter. That is the love for the doer of good in himself as being a doer of good in general, and not as being a doer of good to you in particular.

This requires, therefore, to love none but Allah Almighty. That is because it is Allah Alone Who does good to all the worlds, and confers upon them out of His bounty and favor, first, by bringing them into existence, second, by perfecting them with the organs and means necessary for their survival, third, by getting them blessed in the means and things He has created to fulfill their unnecessary needs, and fourth by beautifying them with the additional traits and accessories to serve their adornment, although they are not necessary for them, nor are they in dire need of them.

The necessary organs are like the head, the heart, and the liver. These which one needs are like the eye, the hand and the leg. Those that serve the adornment are like the bowedness of the eyebrows, the redness of the lips, and the colorfulness of the eyes, to the end of those things missing which does not affect the life.

The necessary favors outside the parts of the body are like water and food. Those which man needs are like medicine, flesh and fruits. The additional traits and accessories are like greenery, the good forms of lights and flowers, and the pleasant delicious kinds of food and fruits, missing which does not affect the life.

Those three divisions are available not only to man, but also to animals, plants and all living beings. This means that it is He Alone Who is the doer of good. How should anyone else be a doer of good? Anyone doing good is but a single good of His power. He is the Creator of the good, of the doer of good, of the doing of good, and of the causes of doing good. To love anyone else because of that is also out of ignorance. Whoever knows this fact would not love but Allah Almighty.

As for the fourth cause, i.e. to love everything that is beautiful just for the sake of beauty and not for a certain fortune or benefit to return to the lover, this is natural to all dispositions. Beauty is divided into the beauty of the apparent form that is visible to the eye, and the beauty of the internal form perceived by the eye of the heart and the light of the insight. The first is shared by people and animals, whereas the latter is unique to the masters of hearts and none shares them in it, I mean of those who do not know but the apparent side of this life of world.

Every beauty is loved by him who perceives beauty. If it is perceived by the heart, then, it is loved by the heart. Its example in reality is the love for the Prophets "peace be upon them" and the religious scholars and learned and those of high manners and noble qualities among men. Their love is imaginable given the distortion in the mind or even the absence of the features and appearance. That is what is intended by the beauty of the internal

image, which is beyond the reach of the five senses. But it might be perceived by the apparent traces indicative of it until when the heart is guided to it, it inclines to and loves it. Whoever loves the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" or Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" or Ash-Shafi'i "may Allah have mercy upon him" loves them only because of their good traces and effects they left after them, and not because of their good image or even their apparent acts. However, their good acts signify their good qualities and high manners which are the source of those acts.

However, the internal qualities of acts go back, with verification, to both the knowledge and power. The more the learnt is noble and perfect, the more the knowledge of it is noble and beautiful; and similarly the more the thing under power is more noble and high, the more the power over it is noble and high. To be sure, the noblest of all things to be learnt is Allah Almighty. No doubt, the best and the noblest of knowledge is the gnosis of Allah Almighty; and the more the thing to be learnt is close and attached to Him, the more it is noble and high.

Thus, the beauty of the qualities of the sincere lovers of truth whom the hearts love by nature goes back to three things: The first is their knowledge of Allah Almighty, His angels, Books, Prophets, and the laws and religions of His Prophets. The second is their power to amend their own selves and the servants of Allah by guiding and leading them to the straight path. The third is their abstention from vices, abominable things and prevailing desires, which divert from the established ways of good and rather draw to the ways of evil.

It is with the like of those things that the Prophets "peace be upon them", religious scholars, caliphs, just and generous rulers and kings are loved by hearts. Compare then those qualities with the attributes of Allah Almighty.

As for knowledge, where is the knowledge of the earlier and later generations from the knowledge of Allah Almighty that encompasses all things, to the extent that even no atom's weight escapes from Him in the heavens and on earth. He Almighty addressed all the people saying: "of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)" (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾

Moreover, if all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth gather together to comprehend His knowledge and wisdom about the details of creating such a little thing as an ant or a mosquito, by no means would they be able to learn even one-hundredth of it: "Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne does extend over the heavens and the earth." (Al-Baqarah 255)

﴿ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّا بِمَا شَآءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ ﴿٢٥٥﴾ ﴾

As for that little amount of knowledge which the people learn, it is by virtue of His instructing them that they learnt it. He Almighty said: "He has created man: He has taught him speech (and Intelligence)." (Ar-Rahman 3-4)

﴿ خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ۝ عَلَّمَهُ ٱلْبَيَانَ ۝ ﴾

Thus, if the beauty and nobility of the knowledgeable should be loved, and at the same time, the one endued with knowledge is perfect, by that consideration, none deserves to be loved other than Allah Almighty. The sciences of all the scholars and learnt among men are ignorance in comparison with His knowledge. Whoever knows the most knowledgeable and the most ignorant of his time, in no way would he love but the most knowledgeable, given that the most ignorant learns of knowledge what is required for him in his living.

On the other hand, the disparity between the knowledge of Allah and the knowledge of the creatures is greater than the disparity between the knowledge of the most knowledgeable and the knowledge of the most ignorant among the people. That is because the most knowledgeable excels the most ignorant only with a limited number of sciences, which the ignorant is possibly imaginable to attain by acquisition and effort. But the excellence of the knowledge of Allah Almighty over the sciences of all the people is infinite, and beyond measure. His knowledge is infinite unlike the knowledge of the people which is limited.

As for the attribute of power, it is perfection, whereas powerlessness is imperfection. Every kind of perfection, grandeur, glory and Excellency should be necessarily loved by the hearts, since their perception is pleasant. One might hear in the stories about the bravery of Ali and Khalid "Allah be pleased with them" and the other courageous men, and their power with which they excelled their fellows, thereupon his heart is moved, rejoices and gets comforted only by the pleasure of hearing, let alone the vision, which develops love in the hearts. Compare then the power of all the people with that of Allah Almighty.

The most powerful who has the greatest and the most extensive kingdom, the ablest to overpower his desires and curb the vices of the self, and the most capable of leading himself and the people: What is the limit of his power? He might excel many among the people in many things. But at the same time, he has no power to give himself life or death or resurrection, nor to cause harm or benefit to himself whenever and however he likes. He even has no power to keep his eye from blindness, his tongue from muteness, his ear from deafness, and his body from ailment. The things over which he has no power in himself and in the people are beyond reckoning, let alone what is beyond the reach of his power, like the dominion of the heavens with its horizons and celestial bodies, and the earth with its mountains, oceans, rivers, plants, animals, etc, over which he has no power.

And even his power of that which is under his power does not come from his own self. It is Allah Who created him and created his power, and created the means to attain that power. If a mosquito is invested with authority over the strongest who has the greatest and the most extensive kingdom among the people, surely, it would destroy him. The servant has no power unless he is established in power by his Master and Lord. In confirmation of that, He

Almighty said about the greatest king on the earth, i.e. Dhul-quatrain: "Verily We established his power on earth, and We gave him the ways and the means to all ends." (Al-Kahf 84)

﴿إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَءَاتَيْنَـٰهُ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ سَبَبًا ﴾

He did not gain all of his kingdom and ruling without being established in power by Allah Almighty in a part of the land. However, the whole earth is but a gnat in comparison with the celestial bodies of the galaxy; and all parts which the people govern on it are but a few molecules of that earth. That few molecules are out of the favor and bounty of Allah Almighty.

Thus, it is impossible to love anyone of the servants of Allah Almighty for his power, and does not love Allah Almighty for the same reason, given that there is neither strength nor power but with Allah Almighty. He is the Irresistible, the Powerful, the Exalted in wise and knowledge, in Whose Right Hand the heavens are rolled up, and in Whose grasp the earth with all of its kings and what it contains is, and under Whose power the forelocks of all the people are: Were He to destroy all of them, this would decrease nothing of his sovereignty, and were He to create thousands times the like of them, no fatigue nor trouble would befall Him. In this way, there is no power nor a powerful but that they are a trace of the traces of His power. Whose is the beauty, brightness, brilliance, power, grandeur, and supremacy. If it is imaginable to love a powerful for his perfect power, then, none other than Him Almighty deserves such love by that consideration.

As for the attribute of being deemed far above all shortcomings and defects, and exalted from vices and wickedness, it is one of the things that makes love binding and is required for beauty in the internal images. It is true that the Prophets "peace be upon them" and sincere lovers of truth, are deemed far above vices and wickedness, but the absolute perfection is not imagined except for Allah, the One and Only, the Real, the Sovereign and the Holy One, the Lord of Glory and Honor. But every creature should have a kind of defect. His being created and subjugated is the utmost degree of deficiency and helplessness. The absolute perfection belongs to Allah Alone, and none other than Him has that absolute perfection except in proportion to what is given to him by Allah Almighty. It is beyond one's capacity to have the utmost perfection, for the utmost perfection, in its least degree, is not to be a servant subjugated to and sustained by another. That imperfection is impossible to the other (i.e. Allah), it is He Alone Who has the absolute perfection, is deemed far above imperfection, and exalted from shortcomings and defects.

By that consideration, the real nature of beauty and perfection to be loved is not attained but by Him Alone. The perfection of anyone else is not absolute, but it is so in comparison with what is inferior to it in perfection. It is like the horse which has perfection in comparison with the donkey, the man in comparison with the horse, and so on. Imperfection includes all creatures, but they vary in the degree of imperfection.

The beautiful is loved, and the absolute beautiful is the One and Only, to Whom there is no equal, the Unique Whom none disputes, the Independent

Who is free of want, the Omnipotent Who does what He wills and decrees what He likes, and none could cancel out His decree, or change His fate, from Whose knowledge even an atom's weight in the heavens and on earth never escapes, the Irresistible in Whose grasp are the forelocks and necks of all the tyrants, the Eternal Whose existence has no beginning, the Never-Ending, Whose survival has no end, the Self-Subsisting, who is sustainable by Himself, and every existing is sustained by Him, the Compeller of the heavens and the earth, the Creator of the non-living and living beings, Who Alone is the Exalted in honor and supremacy, kingdom (of the visibles) and dominion (of the invisibles), the Lord of bounty, beauty, glory, brilliance, power and perfection. In the knowledge of His glory the minds are put to confusion, and His description is beyond the capacity of the tongues. The perfection of the gnosis of the Gnostics is to acknowledge their inability to fathom Him, and the utmost degree of the Prophethood of the Prophets "peace be upon them" is to admit their shortage of describing Him, as stated by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "I could not calculate praises on You, You are as You praised Yourself."

Love by that consideration is stronger and more confirmed than the love for doing good, for doing good increases and decreases. For this reason, Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "The closest in love to Me is a servant who loves Me without expecting any gift to receive from Me, but rather gives the Lord His due estimate." According to the Psalms: "And Who is more wrongful than a servant who worships Me for Paradise or Hell? Had I not created Paradise or Hell, would I not have been worthy of worship?"

Once, Jesus "peace be upon him" came upon a set of worshippers whose bodies were lean, and when he asked them about the reason they said: "We fear the fire (of Hell) and expect for Paradise." On that he said to them: "Do you fear a creature and expect for a creature?" He then came upon another group of worshippers whose bodies were lean, and they said to him: "We worship Allah out of love for Him and Honoring His Glory." He said to them: "You are really the allies of Allah Almighty, and with you I have been commanded to stay."

According to Abu Hazim: "I feel shy of worshipping Allah Almighty just because of reward and punishment, thereupon I would be like the evil servant, who would not work unless he feels afraid of his master, or like the wicked hireling who would not work unless he is given." It is reported in a certain narration: "None of you should be like the evil hireling: If he is not given a charge, he would not work; nor like the evil servant: If he does not feel afraid of his master, he would not work."

As for the fifth cause of love, it is the relevance and resemblance, for the match of a thing is attracted to it. For this reason, the boy gets affable with the boy like him, the old man with the old man, the bird with a bird of its kind, and drives away from that which is different from it. Similarly, the scholar gets affable with a scholar like him more than he does with a craftsman, and the carpenter gets affable with a carpenter like him more than

he does with a farmer, and so on. This is confirmed by experience and different narrations and traditions, as we have previously clarified in the chapter of Brotherhood in (the religion of) Allah Almighty in the Book of the Etiquettes of Companionship.

If relevance is a cause of love, it might be apparent like the boy's resemblance to the boy in the boyhood, or hidden in such a way as none knows, like the accord between two persons without observing beauty, or covet of wealth. To this the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred in his statement: "Souls are mobilized soldiers: those from amongst them who are familiar to each other (in the heaven) would have affinity with one another (in the world) and those from amongst them who opposed each other (in the Heaven) would also be at odds (in the world)." [Muslim] recognition here stands for resemblance, whereas opposition for disagreement.

This cause also requires to love Allah Almighty, for an internal relevance which does not go to the resemblance in the form and image in so much as to internal meanings, a part of which might possibly be mentioned, and the other part is impossible to be mentioned in the books, but rather left under the cover of molecules until the sojourners find it once they fulfills the condition of following the path.

What might be possibly mentioned here is the servant's closeness to his Lord in the attributes in accordance with which he is commanded to behave. It is said: "Let your morals similar to the morals of Allah Almighty." It is to acquire the praiseworthy qualities which are the attributes of the Lord, like knowledge, dutifulness, doing of good, kindness, overflowing with good and mercy upon the people, sincerity in advice to them, guiding them to the truth and preventing them from the falsehood, to the end of the noble manners and good conduct approved by Sharia. All of this brings one close to Allah Almighty, not in the place in so much as with the attributes and qualities.

What is impossible to be written in books is that which is referred to by Allah Almighty in His statement: "They ask you concerning the Spirit (of inspiration). Say: "The Spirit (cometh) by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)"" (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾

He showed here that it is a Divine matter beyond the reach of the human mind. More evident is His statement: "When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of My spirit, fall you down in obeisance unto him." (Sad 72)

﴿ فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُۥ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِى فَقَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ سَـٰجِدِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

This is why He caused His angels to fall in prostration to him. To this the statement of Allah Almighty refers: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." (Al-Baqarah 30)

﴿ إِنِّى جَاعِلٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

Adam "peace be upon him" did not deserve the vicegerency of Allah

Almighty on earth but for this relevance, to which refers the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Allah Almighty created Adam on His Image." But the short-minded think that there is no image but the external one that is perceived by senses, for which they went on making manifestations and embodiments, Exalted be Allah, the Lord of the worlds from all the ignorant ascribe to Him. To this He Almighty refers in His saying to Moses "peace be upon him": "I fell ill and you did not visit me." He asked: "O Lord! How could I visit You?" He Almighty said: "My servant so and so fell ill and you did not visit him; and had you visited him, you would have found Me with him."

This relevance does not appear evident unless one is regular on the supererogatory deeds after completing the obligatory duties. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty says as told by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "My servant continues to come close to Me with the supererogatory deeds until I love him, and once I love him I become his ear therewith he hears, his eye therewith he sees, and hi tongue therewith he speaks." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Here, we should withhold the rein of the pen, for the people have divided into parties: the short-minded inclined to making manifestations and embodiments, and extremists went beyond the limits of relevance to immanentism and pantheism, to the extent that one of them said: "I am the real." The Christians went astray concerning Jesus "peace be upon him" saying: "He is the god." Little are those to whom it has been revealed the impossibility of manifestations and embodiments, as well as the impossibility of immanentism and pantheism. But at the same time, the real nature of the mystery have become clear to them.

That is the greatest and the strongest cause of love.

In sum, those are the five causes of love, and they are perfect and complete, really and not allegorically, in their highest and not in their lowest degree, in Allah Almighty, and not in anyone else. For this, it is reasonable and acceptable to those endued with deep insights to love none but Allah Almighty, as well as it is reasonable and acceptable to the blind to love anyone other than Allah Almighty. On the other hand, whoever loves anyone for one or two of those causes, is imagined to love another for he shares him in that one or two causes, and partnership in itself is shortage in love. None from among the creatures is loved but that he has a partner in one or two causes for which he is loved, unlike Allah Almighty Who has no partner at all. Thus, there is no partnership in His love, which means that no shortage lies in His love, just as no partnership lies in His attributes. He Alone deserves the principal and perfect love, in which none shares Him.

CHAPTER FOUR

EXPOSITION OF THE FACT THAT THE NOBLEST AND HIGHEST PLEASURE LIES IN THE GNOSIS OF ALLAH ALMIGHTY AND LOOKING AT HIS BOUNTEOUS FACE; AND NO PLEASURE HAS THE SAME EFFECT UNLESS ONE IS DEPRIVED OF IT

It should be known to you that the pleasures follow perceptions, and the

man has many powers and instincts, each of which has its unique pleasure, which is to get what agrees with its nature for which it is created. Those instincts and powers have not been placed in man jestingly, but each serves a certain purpose that befits its very nature. The instinct of anger, for example, was created for retribution and revenge, and thus, its pleasure lies in the retribution and revenge that agree with its very nature. The instinct of the appetite for food was created to obtain nutrition that sustains the body, and its pleasure lies in obtaining that nutrition which agrees with its very nature. The same is true of the instincts of hearing, seeing and smelling. Overall, there is no instinct but that it should have pain and pleasure in relation to its perceptibles.

Similarly, in the heart, there is an instinct called the Divine light, as elicited from the statement of Allah Almighty: "Is one whose heart Allah has opened to Islam, so that he has received enlightenment from Allah, (no better than one hard-hearted)?" (Az-Zumar 22)

﴿ أَفَمَن شَرَحَ ٱللَّهُ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَٰسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم (٢٢) ﴾

This instinct might also be called the mind, the internal insight, the light of faith and certainty. Regardless of its different names and terms, the meaning is the same. The heart differs from all parts of the body with a quality therewith it perceives the meanings that are beyond imagination and sense, like the perception of the creation of the world, and its lack of an eternal powerful omnipotent wise creator, who has Divine qualities and attributes.

You may call that instinct the mind provided that it should not be construed as the means to the different ways of debate and disputation. It is the quality therewith man excels the animals, and perceives the gnosis of Allah Almighty, which makes it the noblest of all qualities. This instinct was created in order for man to know, with it, the realities of all things. Its nature agrees with knowledge and science, in which its pleasure lies. It is not hidden that there is a pleasure in the knowledge and science, to the extent that one rejoices when he is attributed to knowledge even of a little thing, and grieves whenever he is attributed to ignorance even of a little thing. Man always persists in acquiring knowledge and science in the particular field in which he is specialized. All of this goes back to the pleasure of knowledge, for knowledge is one of the attributes most unique to the Lord, which is the utmost degree of perfection.

On the other hand, the pleasure of knowledge of sowing and sewing is not like the pleasure of knowledge of ruling and politics, nor is the knowledge of grammar and poetry like the knowledge of Allah Almighty, His attributes, angels and the dominion of the heavens and the earth. However, the pleasure of knowledge is determined by the nobility of the knowledge, and the nobility of knowledge is determined by the nobility of that which is to be known, to the extent that whoever learns the innermost selves of the people finds a pleasure within himself because of that, and if he fails to know it, his disposition requires him to do his best to learn it. Of a surety, his knowledge of the internal self and states of the president or ruler, for example, is more pleasant in his sight than his

knowledge of the internal self of the farmer or a sewer, and the higher the one whose internal self he learns, the more pleasant and delightful it becomes to him.

It seems clear then that the most pleasant of sciences is the noblest among them, and its nobility is determined by the nobility of that to be known. If that to be known is the most perfect, the noblest, the most glorious and the greatest, of a surety, the knowledge of it should be the most pleasant, the most delightful and the noblest of all sciences. By my life, is there anything in the existence, more noble, more grand, more glorious and more perfect than the Creator of all things, Who gives them their perfection and adornment, Who begins the creation and would repeat it once again (in the hereafter), and Who manipulates and organizes all things? Is it imaginable that the presence of any king, no matter how excellent, bright, brilliant and graceful it might be, greater than the presence of the Lord whose glory and excellence are beyond the description of describers?

If you have no doubt about that, then, you should not have doubt as to the fact that the knowledge of the mysteries of the Lord is the highest, the most pleasant, the most delightful, and the noblest kind of knowledge, and it is more fitting for souls to feel perfection, beauty, glory, excellence, and souls are more entitled to rejoice, grow happy and get comforted with that. In this way, it seems evident that knowledge is pleasant, and that the most pleasant knowledge is the knowledge of Allah Almighty, His attributes, acts, angels, manipulation of His dominion, from the utmost height of His Throne (of Majesty) to the lowest bottom of the earth.

Thus, it should be learnt that the pleasure of knowledge is stronger than all other pleasures, i.e. the pleasures of desires and anger, and the pleasures of all five senses. Pleasures differ from each other, first in kind, like the difference of the pleasure of sexual intercourse from that of hearing, the pleasure of knowledge from that of authority; and second in weakness and strength, like the difference of the pleasure of orgasm of him whose sexual desire is strong from that of him who has only a weak sexual desire, and the pleasure of looking at a beautiful and pretty face from the pleasure of looking at a face of inferior beauty.

The strongest of pleasures is known by its effect and influence on the other pleasures. If one is given the freedom to choose to look at a beautiful picture, or smell good odors, and he chooses the former, it would be learnt that the pleasure of looking is stronger in his sight than that of smelling good odors, and so on. That is a true standard therewith it is known how a certain pleasure is preponderant over another.

Let's say that the pleasures are divided into the apparent like the pleasures of the five senses, and the internal like the pleasures of authority, supremacy, dignity, knowledge, and the like of that, which are beyond the five senses. The internal meanings prevail more than the apparent pleasures over the hearts of those endued with perfection. If a man is given the freedom to choose the pleasure of the fat chicken or the pleasure of authority and supremacy: the man of despicable ambitions would choose the flesh and sweet; and the man of high ambitions and perfect mind would choose authority and supremacy on the

exclusion of hunger.

As well as the pleasures of dignity and knowledge prevail over the hearts of those who transcend the age of boyhood and the state of madness, the pleasure of the gnosis of Allah Almighty, the beauty of the presence of the Lord, and looking at the mysteries of Divine things prevails more than the pleasure of supremacy, which is the highest of pleasure that prevail over the hearts of most people. The best expression of that is the statement of Allah Almighty: "Now no person knows what delights of the eye are kept hidden (in reserve) for them, as a reward for their (good) Deeds." (As-Sajdah 17)

﴿ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

He Almighty prepared for them that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard about, and which has never occurred to the mind of anyone.

But none knows that except him who tastes both pleasures together. Of a surety, he comes to know that the pleasure of authority and supremacy is perishable and limited for it is practiced over creatures who are perishable, unlike the other pleasure which is permanent, never-ending and eternal even after death which does not interrupt it in so much as disengages the self from anything that diverts one from it. Such pleasure is void of competition, contest and impurity, and extends to include all the creatures to come to it, for its width is like the breadth of both the heavens and the earth. The fruits of this Garden is eternal and heavenly, and death never exterminates them, since death never destroys the place of the gnosis of Allah Almighty, which is the spirit, and the spirit is a Divine heavenly matter: "Think not of those who are slain in Allah's Way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the Presence of their Lord; They rejoice in the Bounty provided by Allah:. And with regard to those left behind, who have not yet joined them (in their bliss), the (Martyrs) glory in the fact that on them is no fear, nor have they (cause to) grieve." (Al Imran 169-170)

﴿ وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتًۢا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾ فَرِحِينَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِم مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ ﴾

Think not that this is particular to the one who is killed in the battlefield, for the Gnostic has, for each breath he takes, as much reward as is equal to that given to one thousand martyrs. According to a certain narration: "The martyr hopes in the hereafter to be returned to the world in order to be slain once again due to the great reward and honor he receives for martyrdom; and the martyrs hope they were Gnostics, due to the high degree of the Gnostics they see." (the first half of both Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas).

Thus, all sides of the dominion of the heavens and the earth form the field of the gnosis of the Gnostic from which he gets what he likes, with no need to move to it with his body and person. He sees the beauty of the dominion in a Garden whose width is equal to the breadth of the heavens and the earth. Each Gnostic has the same without reducing the portion of each other. But they vary in the width of their fields in proportion to their variation in the width of their vision and extension of their gnosis. They are of different degrees in the Sight of

Allah Almighty; and their degrees are beyond calculation.

It seems clear then that the pleasure of authority and supremacy, which is an internal pleasure, is, in the sight of those endued with perfection, stronger than the pleasures of all five senses. That internal pleasure is not the portion of a boy, a mad, or an animal. At the same time, those endued with perfection combine both the pleasures of the five senses along with the internal pleasure of authority, but they give priority to the pleasure of authority and supremacy.

That the pleasure of the gnosis of Allah Almighty, His attributes, acts, and mysteries of His dominion of the heavens and the earth, is stronger than the pleasure of authority and supremacy is unique only to him who attains the rank of knowledge, and tastes its pleasure. It is impossible to prove that fact to him who has no heart, for the heart is the fountainhead of that power, just as it is impossible to prove that the pleasure of the sexual intercourse is more preponderant than the pleasure of play to the boys or that it is more preponderant than the pleasure of smelling good odors to him who is sexually impotent, for he lacks the attribute therewith such pleasure is attained. But whoever is free from the sexual impotence, and his sense of smelling is good would know, for certain, the disparity between both pleasures. At that point, it might be said: "Whoever tastes should inevitably know (the pleasure of what he tasted)."

As for him who meditates in the gnosis of Allah Almighty, and even a little of the mysteries of the dominion of Allah Almighty has been revealed to him, his heart, at the moment of revelation, would rejoice so much, and wonder at himself, how he is firm and able to tolerate his strong joy and cheerfulness of what has been revealed to him. This is attained only by taste, and any speech in it longer than that is of no use.

This amount is sufficient to bring to your mind that the gnosis of Allah Almighty is the most pleasant thing, over which there is no pleasure.

For this reason, Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "Allah Almighty has servants whom neither the fear of the fire nor the hope for Paradise occupies from Him, then, how should the world occupy them from Allah Almighty?" One of the brothers of Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi said to him: "O Abu Mahfudh! Tell us: which thing has caused you to devote yourself to worship and get isolated from the people?" He kept silent, thereupon he asked him: "Is it the mention of death?" He said: "Which thing is death?" He said: "Is it the mention of the grave and the hereafter life?" He said: "Which thing is the grave or the hereafter life?" he further asked: "Is it the fear of the fire and the hope for Paradise?" he said: "Which thing is all of that? No doubt, a king in Whose Hand all of this is, should cause you to forget all things once you love Him; and if there is knowledge between you and Him, this would be sufficient for you."

According to Jesus "peace be upon him": "If you see the man devoted to seek the Lord Almighty, you should know that this has diverted him from anything else." An old man saw Bishr Ibn Al-Harith in a dream and asked him: "What is the news of Abu Nasr At-Tamar and Abd-Al-Wahhab Al-Warraq?" he said: "I

have left them at that moment in front of Allah Almighty, eating and drinking." He further asked him: "Then, what about you?" he said: "Allah Almighty learnt my little desire for eating and drinking, thereupon he gave me the pleasure of looking at His Glory."

It is narrated on the authority of Ali Ibn Al-Muwaffaq that he said: I saw in a dream as if I were made to enter the Garden and behold! There was a man sitting on a repast with an angel on his right side and an angel on his left side giving him from all the delicious kinds of food, and he was eating. I also saw a man standing at the gate of the Garden looking at the faces of people, allowing some to enter and returning others with failure. Then, I left them to the garden of Holiness and I saw a man nearby the Throne (of Majesty), having stretched his sight to look at the Countenance of Allah Almighty. I asked Ridwan (the keeper of the Garden): "Who is that?" He said: "Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi, who worshipped Allah Almighty, not for fear of His fire, nor in longing for His Garden, but just in love for Him, thereupon He allowed for him to look at His Countenance on the Day of Judgement." He mentioned that the other two are Bishr Ibn Al-Harith and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal.

That is the significance of the statement of Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Whoever today is engaged in himself, would remain engaged in himself in the morrow; and whoever today is engaged in his Lord would be engaged in his Lord in the morrow."

Ath-Thawri asked Rabi'ah: "What is the real nature of your faith?" she said: "I have never worshipped Him for fear of His fire, nor in the hope of His Paradise, thereby I would be like the evil hireling. But I have worshipped Him out of love and longing for Him." In that meaning, she composed the following poetic verses: "I love You two loves: I love You out of passion, and I love You for You are fitting for love. As for the love out of passion, it is my engagement in Your celebration and remembrance from anything else. As for the love for which You are fitting, it is Your revealing to me the veils so that I would be able to see Your Glory. In both I am not praised, for all perfect praise be to You in both."

She intended by the love out of passion that she loved Allah for His kindness and favors upon her, through the transitory fortunes; and by the love for which He is fitting, she intended that she loved Him for His Beauty, Glory and Excellence, that was revealed to her, and that is the higher and stronger of both kinds of love. It is the pleasure of seeing the beauty of the Lord which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred to in his statement relating from his Lord: "I have prepared for My good righteous servants that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard about, and which has never occurred to the mind of anyone." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Some of those pleasures are hastened on in this world but for those whose hearts attain the utmost degree of purity; and this is the significance of the statement of one of them: "I say 'O Lord, O Allah', thereupon I find that on my heart heavier than the mountains, for the call is from behind a veil. Have you seen a sitter calling his sitter?" The purpose of all the Gnostics is to be in touch

with and meet Him Almighty. That is the comfort and pleasure of the eye, which no soul knows what is kept thereof for it. Once it is attained, all anxieties and desires vanish, and the heart is engrossed in its pleasure, to the extent that were he to be thrown in the fire, he would not sense its pain, and were the pleasures and delights of Paradise to be offered to him, he would pay no attention to it, due to the perfection of his pleasure, and attaining the utmost finale beyond which there is no further finale.

By my life, how one who does not understand but the love for the sensibles taste the pleasure of looking at the Countenance of Allah Almighty? What is the significance of Allah's promise of that to His servants in the hereafter, as it is the greatest of all pleasures at all? Furthermore, whoever knows Allah Almighty would come to learn that all desires and pleasures, whatever they might be, are included under that great pleasure. The pleasure of the gnosis of Allah Almighty prevails over all pleasures of eating, drinking, and even sexual intercourse. Paradise is to please the senses, whereas the pleasure of the heart is only to meet Allah Almighty.

Following is an example for the development of the pleasure among the people: the boy, with the commencements of his movement and discernment, an instinct appears in him, therewith he gets pleasure in play and amusement and it is in his sight the most pleasant of all things. After that, he experiences the instinct of adornment and putting on the smart clothes, and riding mounts, with which he regards with slightness the pleasure of play and amusement. After that, the pleasure of sexual intercourse and desire for women appears in him, with which he leaves all the other pleasures and does his best to attain it. Then, the pleasure of loftiness, authority, supremacy and multiplying (in rivalry) appears in him, and this is the last and the highest and the strongest of all the worldly pleasures, as confirmed by Allah Almighty in His statement: "Know you (all), that the life of this world is but play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting and multiplying, (in rivalry) among yourselves, riches and children. Here is a similitude; how rain and the growth which it brings forth, delight (the hearts of) the tillers; soon it withers; you wilt see it grow yellow; then it becomes dry and crumbles away. But in the Hereafter is a Penalty severe (for the devotees of wrong). And Forgiveness from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure (for the devotees of Allah). And what is the life of this world, but goods and chattels of deception?" (Al-Hadid 20)

﴿ ٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِى ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَوْلَـٰدِ ۖ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ ٱلْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُۥ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَىٰهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَـٰمًا ۖ وَفِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ ۚ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَـٰعُ ٱلْغُرُورِ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

After that another instinct appears in him, therewith he attains the pleasure of the gnosis of Allah Almighty and His acts and attributes, with which he regards with slightness all the previous pleasures. Thus, the more a pleasure appears later, the stronger it is than what is prior to it.

That is the natural gradation of pleasures: The love for play appears in the age

of childhood, the love for women and adornment in the age of adulthood, the love for authority and supremacy over twenty, and the love for knowledge towards the age of forty; and that is the supreme finale. As well as the boy laughs at him who leaves play and engages in adoration of women and pursuit of authority, the rulers laugh at those who leave authority and ruling and rather engage in the gnosis of Allah Almighty.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXPOSITION OF WHY THE PLEASURE OF LOOKING IN THE HEREAFTER EXCELS THE PLEASURE OF THE GNOSIS IN THE WORLD

It should be known to you that the perceptibles are divided into what is subject to imagination like the imagery and colourful and manifested forms of animals, persons and plants; and what is not subject to imagination like the Essence of Allah Almighty and all that is not a body such as knowledge, power, will, and the like of them. Whoever sees a man and then lowers his sight, he would find his picture present in his imagination as if he is looking at him. But once he opens his eye and looks at his person, he would detect differences between both (the imaged and the real pictures). Of a surety, the differences do not go back to the difference between both pictures, for the seen picture agrees with the imaged one. But those differences go back to the increasing clarity and brightness. The seen picture is clearer and more bright. Its example is like a person who sees a thing a short time before the daybreak, and then sees it once again when it is clear daylight. The difference between both pertains only to the increasing clarity and brightness.

Thus, imagination is the first commencement of perception, and vision completes that perception. It is the utmost degree of exposure. It is called vision for it is the utmost degree of exposure and not because it pertains to the eye. Were Allah Almighty to create the perfect perception in the forehead or in the breast, it would also deserve to have the name of vision.

Having understood this in the imaged things, it should be known to you that there are two degrees to perceive the information that are not formed in imagination: the first is essential and the second is complementary; and between both degrees, there are nuances of difference concerning clarity and exposure just like what is between the imaged and the real. The second is called, in comparison with the first, vision, contemplation, and meeting. It is called vision for it represents the utmost degree of exposure. As well as it is the established way of Allah Almighty that closing the eyelids prevents from perfect exposure through vision, as being a veil between the sight and what is seen, which should be removed in order for the vision to occur, it is also the established way of Allah Almighty that so long as the soul is veiled by the incidents of body and requirements of desires and prevailing human characteristics, it fails to achieve contemplation and meeting as regards the information outside the imagination. This life veils it as the eyelids veils the eye from vision. Why it is a veil takes too long to explain here, and it is not fitting for the knowledge of practical religion.

That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty to Moses "peace be upon him" when he asked to see Him: "By no means can you see Me (direct)." (Al-A'raf 143)

﴿ قَالَ لَن تَرَىٰنِى ﴾

He further said: "No vision can grasp Him. But His grasp is over all vision: He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted with all things." (Al-An'am 103)

﴿ لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ ﴾

Of course He refers here to this world. It is true that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did not see Allah Almighty on the Night Journey to the Heaven. If the veil is removed by death, the soul remains contaminated with the impurities of this world, in which they are different: some of them have impurities and rust accumulated on them, thereupon they corrupted, and those are veiled from the vision of their Lord. Others do not reach the degree of rust, and are susceptible to be polished, and those would be offered to the fire for some time, until the impurities would be removed from them. The duration of that ranges from a short while to seven thousand years, according to the different narrations in this respect. No soul would leave this world without being stained with something of impurities of this world, no matter how little it might be. That is confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: "Not one of you but will pass over it: this is, with your Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished. But We shall save those who guarded against evil, and We shall leave the wrong-doers therein, (humbled) to their knees." (Maryam 71-72)

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ۝ ثُمَّ نُنَجِّى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟ وَّنَذَرُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ۝ ﴾

Each souls is certain to pass over the fire, and uncertain of leaving it. If Allah Almighty purifies and justifies it to the best, and the decree is accomplished, and the reckoning promised by Sharia is finished, and the Garden becomes due, whose time is unspecific which none knows, at that time, every soul is engaged in its purity and cleanness, where neither dust nor dirt troubles the face, for in it the Real rises with His Glory, thereupon He rises to him in such a way that His emergence to him in comparison with what he learnt is like the emergence of the real in comparison with what he imagined. That contemplation and emergence are called vision.

Vision then is a fact, provided that it should not be construed as reference to an imagined thing in a particular place: Exalted be Allah from all of this. On the contrary, as you know Him perfectly in this world, with no imagination of a particular image or definite form, you would se Him as such in the hereafter. Let me say, therefore, that the same gnosis that is attained in the world would be completed and perfected in the hereafter by contemplation and vision, with no difference between what is known in the world and what would be seen in the hereafter other than the increasing clarity and brightness, just as the imagination is perfected and completed by vision.

If the gnosis in this world does not imply any definite form of His Countenance, when this gnosis is completed and perfected in the hereafter, it also would not imply any definite form of His Countenance, for the difference, as we

have already mentioned, does not go beyond the increasing clarity and brightness. To this He Almighty refers in His statement: "Their Light will run forward before them and by their right hands, while they say, "Our Lord! Perfect our Light for us, and grant us Forgiveness: for You have power over all things."" (At-Tahrim 8)

﴿ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴾

To be sure, the perfection of light does not effect but in the increase of clarity.

That is why it is only the Gnostics in this world who would attain the degree of vision in the hereafter, for the gnosis in this world is the seed which turns into a tree of vision in the hereafter, just as the kernel turns into a date-palm; and whoever has no kernels in his land, how should he get date-palms in the end? Whoever does not sow the seeds in the land, how should he harvest the cultivation? Similarly, whoever does not know Allah Almighty in this world, how should he see Him in the hereafter? As well as the gnosis is of different degrees in this world, the vision in the hereafter accordingly would be of different degrees. The difference of vision according to the difference of gnosis is like the difference of plants according to the difference of seeds. From this perspective, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah Almighty would rise (with His Glory) to the people in general, and to Abu Bakr from among them in particular." (Ibn Adi on the authority of Jabir).

Think not that those who are less in rank than Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" would taste the same pleasure of vision and contemplation as he would taste. If one's gnosis in this world is one-tenth that of Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" he should taste only one-tenth Abu Bakr's pleasure of vision, and so on. As well as you see in this world such as gives priority to the pleasure of authority and supremacy over food and marriage, and such as gives preference to the pleasure of knowledge and exposure of the mysteries of the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all Divine matters over the pleasure of authority and supremacy, food, marriage, and all corporal pleasures, similarly, in the hereafter, there would be such as give priority to the pleasure of looking at the Countenance of Allah Almighty over the bliss of Paradise, whose pleasure goes back only to food and marriage. It is those who give preference in this world to the pleasure of knowledge, gnosis and acquaintance with the mysteries of the Lord Almighty over the pleasure of marriage, food and drink, with which almost all the people are concerned.

For this reason, when Rabi'ah was asked about her opinion in the Garden, she said: "The neighbour should be first and then the abode." She showed that she had no concern with the Garden but with the Lord of the Garden. Whoever does not know Allah in this world would not see Him in the hereafter, and whoever does not taste the pleasure of gnosis in this world would not detect the pleasure of vision in the hereafter, for none harvests but the produce of what he cultivates, nor would he be mustered in the hereafter but on the very thing on which he dies in this world, nor does he die but on the very state in which he

lives. It is the gnosis that accompanies him in this world which would be the provision with which he would be blessed in the hereafter, with the difference that it turns into vision and contemplation, by removing the lid, thereupon the pleasure is multiplied in the same way as the pleasure of the lover is multiplied if the imagined picture of his beloved is replaced with seeing his/her person; and this is the utmost degree of pleasure.

On the other hand, the Garden is good and has for each one what he desires for. Whoever desires only for the meeting of Allah Almighty would taste no pleasure other than that, and even any other pleasure might harm him. Thus, the bliss of the Garden is in proportion to the love for Allah Almighty. The principle of happiness is the gnosis which Sharia describes as the faith.

You may argue: "If the pleasure of vision is to be measured on the pleasure of gnosis, it should be weak, for the latter is weak, and even if it is multiplied, it would not become too strong to cause one to regard with slightness all other pleasures of Paradise." In reply to that, it should be known to you that this slightness with which the pleasure of gnosis is regarded goes back to the absence of gnosis: whoever lacks gnosis, how should he be able to taste its pleasure? Even, if he has only weak gnosis and his heart is attached to the things and benefits of this world, how should he be able to perceive its pleasure? The Gnostics in their gnosis, meditation, and private talk with Allah Almighty, have of indescribable pleasures that if the Garden with all its pleasures is offered to them in this world, by no means would they replace them with it. On the other hand, the pleasure of meeting and contemplation is incomparable to this pleasure of gnosis, given its perfection and completion, just as the pleasure of seeing the real person of the beloved is incomparable to the pleasure of the picture imagined of him/her, and the pleasure of smelling the good smell of delicious food is incomparable to the pleasure of tasting it, and the pleasure of touching with the hand is incomparable to the pleasure of sexual intercourse.

In order to show how great the difference between both is, let's give an example: The pleasure of looking at the face of the beloved in this world varies due to many causes: First is the perfection and imperfection of the beauty of the beloved: The more the beloved is perfect in beauty, the more looking at his/her face is pleasant. The second is the perfection of the power of love, desire and attachment: the more one is attached to and desirous for the beloved, the more his looking at his/her face is pleasant. the third is the perfection and imperfection of perception: the more one sees his/her beloved direct and close, and not from behind a partition or a screen, the more his looking at his/her face is pleasant; and of a surety, the pleasure of sleeping with one's beloved as naked with no garment between both is incomparable to the pleasure of sleeping with him/her with a garment to separate between their bodies. The fourth is to eliminate the distracting impediments and pains that divert the heart: no doubt, the pleasure of the sound healthy one who is devoted to looking at his/her beloved is different from the pleasure of the unhealthy or scared one, or him whose heart is engaged in something else.

On that basis, you should compare looking in the hereafter with gnosis in this world: the screen represents the body, scorpions and bees represent the desires and lusts, the weakness of desire and love represents the self-shortage in this world and lack of love for the highest company (of angels), and rather devotion to the lowest of the low things, just like the boy's shortage of observing the pleasure of authority and supremacy and rather devotion to the pleasure of the play with the bird.

No matter how strong the gnosis of the Gnostic in this world, it could hardly be free form distracting impediments, which might be weak in some cases. No doubt, what seems from the beauty of gnosis might astound the mind, and bring about pleasure so much that the heart is about to rent asunder because of its enormity, but it is only like the flash of lightning which lasts only for a very short time. This is characteristic of this perishable life, unlike the permanent good life after death, in which there would be no trouble, nor suffering, nor fatigue, as confirmed by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The real life is that of the hereafter." Allah Almighty also said: "What is the life of this world but amusement and play? But verily the Home in the Hereafter, that is life indeed, if they but knew." (Al-Ankabut 64)

﴿ وَمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ لَهِىَ ٱلْحَيَوَانُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

Whoever attains that rank loves, indeed, to meet Allah Almighty, and loves death accordingly, which he does not dislike except as much as he expects to increase his gnosis in life before death. The gnosis is like a deep vast ocean which has no limit. It is impossible to fathom the glory and majesty of Allah Almighty. The more the gnosis of Allah Almighty, His attributes, acts, and mysteries of His dominion of the heavens and the earth, increases and is intensified, the bliss and pleasure in the hereafter increase and become strong, just in the same way as the more one's sowing is good, the more the cultivation and harvest increase and become good. That sowing is possible only in this world, and it could not be cultivated in a place other than the heart, and the harvest would be gathered only in the hereafter.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The best happiness is the long lifetime to be spent in obedience of Allah Almighty." That is because the gnosis of Allah Almighty becomes more complete, perfect and vast the more one's lifetime is long. Whoever loves death then loves it because he thinks he has reached the utmost and farthest extreme of gnosis after which there is no gnosis available to him; and whoever dislikes death does so because he hopes for more gnosis to attain through his long lifetime. That is why death is liked and disliked in the sight of Gnostics.

But all the other people are limited in their vision of death to their worldly desires and lusts: If they are extensive, they would like to survive in this world, and if they are limited, they would hope to die and leave this world. All of this is out of deprivation and loss whose source is ignorance and heedlessness. Both ignorance and heedlessness are the fountainhead of every kind of misery and wretchedness, whereas gnosis and science are the cause of every kind of happiness and pleasure.

With what we have previously mentioned, you have known the significance of love and attachment, the significance of the pleasure of gnosis, the significance of vision, the pleasure of vision, and why it is the most pleasant of all the other pleasures in the sight of those endued with minds and perfection, and not so in the sight of those of shortage, just as the pleasure of authority and supremacy is not the most pleasant in the sight of children.

You may ask: "What is the place of this vision in the hereafter: the heart or the eye?" In reply, it should be known to you that the people are different in this issue. But these endued with deep insights do not care about that difference. However, the mindful eats the herbage without asking about the ground in which it is planted, and whoever desires to see his/her beloved, his attachment engages him from asking whether his vision would be with his/her heart or eye. That is because his/her intention is the vision and its pleasure, whether with the eye or with anything else.

As for what would be in the hereafter, we could not give any judgement but depending on what is heard from traditions and narrations. According to the people of established way and community, it seems to them depending upon the quotations and evidences of Sharia and traditions, that this vision would be attained with the eye, taking the verbs of vision and looking on their apparent meaning, which should not be removed unless there is a compelling necessity for it; and Allah Almighty knows best.

CHAPTER SIX
EXPOSITION OF CAUSES THAT STRENGTHEN LOVE FOR ALLAH ALMIGHTY

It should be known to you that the happiest of people in the hereafter are those who have the strongest love for Allah Almighty in this world. That is because the hereafter is that one comes to Allah Almighty and attains the happiness of meeting Him; and how great the bliss of the lover is when he comes to his beloved after an extensive longing, and is able to see him with his own eyes forever, with neither embitterment nor disturbance, neither watcher nor competitor, neither fear nor worry of interruption. But this bliss is always estimated in proportion to the strength of love: The more one's love increases, the more the pleasure increases accordingly.

The servant obtains that love for Allah Almighty in this world, and almost all the faithful believers experience the fundament of that love, for they have the fundament of knowledge and gnosis. What most of them have not is the strong and high degree of love that possesses the self and reaches up to the level of attachment.

However, there are two causes why that love for Allah Almighty increases in this world and becomes strong as such:

One is to cut off all relations with this world, and disengage the heart from love for anyone else other than Allah Almighty. The heart is like a utensil which could not contain vinegar unless water comes out of it first. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " Allah has not made for any man two hearts in his (one) body." (Al-Ahzab 4)

﴿ مَّا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِى جَوْفِهِۦ ﴿٤﴾ ﴾

The perfection of love is to love Allah Almighty wholeheartedly. As long as he turns to anyone else, then, a corner of his heart is engaged in another than Allah. As much as one is engaged in another than Allah Almighty, his love for Allah Almighty decreases, just in the same way as in proportion to what remains of water in the utensil, the quantity of poured the vinegar decreases. To this fact Allah Almighty referred in His statement: " Say: "Allah (sent it down)": then leave them to plunge in vain discourse and trifling." (Al-An'am 91)

﴿ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِى خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ ﴾

And: "In the case of those who say, "Our Lord is Allah," and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend on them (from time to time): "Fear you not!" (they suggest), "Nor grieve! but receive the Glad Tidings of the Garden (of Bliss), that which you were promised!" (Fussilat 30)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

Nay! It is the significance of your testification: "There is no god but Allah", i.e. there is none worthy of worship and love except for Allah Almighty. One worship only whomever he loves. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Then see you such a one as takes as his god his own vain desire?" (Al-Jathiyah 23)

﴿ أَفَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ ﴾

For this reason, he "peace be upon him" said: "The most hateful god to be worshipped on earth is one's inclination and desire." He "peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever said with sincere faith 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah' shall enter Paradise." Sincere faith here is to devote oneself to Allah Almighty in such a way as there remains in his heart no partner with Allah Almighty. In this way, Allah Almighty becomes his sole beloved, purpose and desired goal and objective. Whoever is in such a state, then, the world is his prison, for it impedes him from seeing his beloved, whereas death is his salvation from that prison, and coming to his beloved.

No doubt, one of the causes of the weakness of love for Allah Almighty is the strength of love for this world, including the love for property, family, offspring, kith and kin, estates, riding mounts, gardens, etc, to the extent that he who rejoices at the sweet voice of birds and the soft touch of dawn breezes is devoted to the bliss of this world, which exposes him to the reduction of the love for Allah from his heart. As much as he is affable with this world, his intimacy with Allah Almighty decreases. None is given anything in this world but that he would be deprived of the like of it in the hereafter, just as much as one comes close to the East, he moves away from the West, and as much as he pleases the heart of one of his wives, he disturbs the heart of her fellow-wife. Both the world and the hereafter are fellow-wives, and they are like the East and the West. This fact has

been revealed to the masters of hearts and insights clearer and more evident than the vision with the eyes.

The way to remove the love for this world from the heart is to abstain in it, stick to patience and perseverance, and be led to Allah Almighty by the rein of fear and hope. What we have already mentioned of the stations of asceticism, patience, gratitude, repentance, fear and hope, are commencements towards one of both corners of love, i.e. to disengage the heart from anything other than Allah Almighty. The first step in it is to have faith in Allah Almighty, the Day of Judgement, the Paradise and fire, therefrom spring fear and hope, therefrom spring repentance and patience on them. All of this leads to abstinence from this world, property, majesty, and all worldly fortunes, until the heart gets purified from all things other than Allah Almighty, and expanded to the gnosis and love for Allah Almighty. All of this is but commencements of purifying the heart. That is one of both corners of love, to which refers the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Purity constitutes half the faith." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Malik Al-Ash'ari).

The second cause of the strength of love for Allah Almighty is the strength and extension of the gnosis of Allah Almighty, and the extent to which it possesses the heart. After purifying the heart from all worldly benefits and engagements, it becomes ready for the seed of love to be sowed in it, like the good soil after being cleaned from grass and its like. There springs from that sowing the tree of love and gnosis. It is the goodly word which Allah Almighty set forth as an example when He said: " See you not how Allah sets forth a parable? A goodly Word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the heavens, It brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord. So Allah sets forth parables for men, in order that they may receive admonition." (Ibrahim 24-25)

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۝ تُؤْتِىٓ أُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍۭ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا ۗ وَيَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ۝ ﴾

He also said: " To Him mount up (all) words of Purity: It is He Who exalts each Deed of Righteousness." (Fatir 10)

﴿ إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ ٱلْكَلِمُ ٱلطَّيِّبُ وَٱلْعَمَلُ ٱلصَّٰلِحُ يَرْفَعُهُۥ ۝ ﴾

Those words of purity stand for gnosis, and the good and righteous deed is like the riding mounts that raise this gnosis, or like the servant. The purpose of the righteous deed is to purify the heart from all the worldly benefits. It is intended only for that gnosis. As for the knowledge of how to work, it is intended only for work. Knowledge, in this sense, is the first and the last. But the first is the science of practical religion (Mu'amalah), whose purpose is work, and the purpose of practical religion is to purify the heart in order for the real to seem evident in it, and it get adorned for the science of gnosis, which is the science of revelation (Mukashafah).

Once this gnosis occurs, love necessarily follows it. It is like the case in which if the one of good temper perceives and sees the beautiful thing with his eyes, he

would soon incline to and love it, and once he loves it, he receives pleasure from that love, for pleasure necessarily follows love, and love necessarily follows gnosis. This gnosis is attained after disengaging the heart from all worldly relations and benefits only through permanent celebration (of the Praises of Allah), pure meditation, earnest seriousness in pursuit of it, and continuous reflection of Allah Almighty, His attributes, acts, the dominion of His heavens and earth, and all of His creatures.

The obtainers of this rank are divided into: The strong, who know Allah Almighty first, with Whom they come to know anything else; and the weak, who know the acts first, from which they promote to know the actor. To the former refers the statement of Allah Almighty: "Is it not enough that your Lord does witness all things?" (Fussilat 53)

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴾

And: "There is no god but He: that is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice. There is no god but He the Exalted in Power, the Wise." (Al Imran 18)

﴿ شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًۢا بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴾

From this perspective, somebody was asked: "With which thing have you known your Lord?" he said: "I have known my Lord first, and had it not been for my Lord, I would not have known my Lord at all." To the latter refers the statement of Allah Almighty: "Soon will We show them Our Signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth), and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth." (Fussilat 53)

﴿ سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْءَافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ ﴾

And: "Do they see nothing in the government of the heavens and the earth and all that Allah has created?" (Al-A'raf 185)

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا۟ فِى مَلَكُوتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ﴾

And: " Say: "Behold all that is in the heavens and on earth"; but neither Signs nor Warners profit those who believe not." (Yunus 101)

﴿ قُلِ ٱنظُرُوا۟ مَاذَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَا تُغْنِى ٱلْءَايَٰتُ وَٱلنُّذُرُ عَن قَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

And: "He Who created the seven heavens one above another: No want of proportion will you see in the Creation of (Allah) Most Gracious. So turn your vision again: see you any flaw? Again turn your vision a second time: (your) vision will come back to you dull and discomfited, in a state worn out." (Al-Mulk 3-4)

﴿ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ طِبَاقًا ۖ مَّا تَرَىٰ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مِن تَفَٰوُتٍ ۖ فَٱرْجِعِ ٱلْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ
ثُمَّ ٱرْجِعِ ٱلْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ﴾

This way is easier on the majority, and larger for the sojourners. To it the Qur'an invites people most when it calls them to consideration, meditation and reflection on the signs of Allah Almighty.

You may argue: "But even, both ways are difficult. So, clarify to us with which of them could aid be sought to acquire gnosis and attain love therewith." In reply to that, it should be known to you that the higher way is to attest, with the Real Almighty, the existence of all the creatures. But it is abstruse, and to talk about it is beyond the reach of understanding of most people. So, there is no benefit to talk about it in the books whatever they might be. As for the easier and lower way, the greatest part of it lies within the limits of the understanding of most people. But minds fall short of understanding it for they turn away from meditation and reflection, and rather engage in the worldly benefits and desires. But the signs with which the gnosis of Allah is attained are beyond calculation, for there is no atom in the heavens or on earth or in what is between them but that it signifies to the perfect power, wisdom, glory and beauty of the Real Almighty. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " Say: "If the ocean were ink (wherewith to write out) the words of my Lord. Sooner would the ocean be exhausted than would the words of my Lord, even if we added another ocean like it, for its aid."" (Al-Kahf 109)

﴿ قُل لَّوْ كَانَ ٱلْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِّكَلِمَٰتِ رَبِّى لَنَفِدَ ٱلْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَن تَنفَدَ كَلِمَٰتُ رَبِّى وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِۦ مَدَدًا ﴿١٠٩﴾ ﴾

To delve into that is to plunge into the sciences of revelation. Moreover, by no means could we make it intrude the sciences of practical religion.

It is by the easier and lower of both ways that the gnosis of Allah Almighty increases, and by the increase of the gnosis of Allah Almighty, the love for Him increases.

So, if you pursue the happiness of meeting Allah Almighty (in the hereafter), you should leave the world with all that it contains behind your back, and dedicate your entire lifetime to the permanent remembrance of Allah Almighty and continuous meditation and reflection of His signs, perchance you would get a little amount of this gnosis, but with that little amount, you would attain a great endless dominion.

CHAPTER SEVEN
EXPOSITION OF WHY PEOPLE VARY IN LOVE

It should be known to you that the faithful believers are equal in the principle of love, for they are equal in love itself. But, at the same time, they vary according to their variance in their portion of gnosis and love for this world. However, things differ in accordance with the disparity of their means and causes, and most people do not know from Allah Almighty other than His names and attributes which they heard and which hit their ears, thereupon they kept and memorized, and perhaps imagined for them meanings from which Allah Almighty, the Lord of all lords, is exalted and hallowed; and perhaps they did not understand their real nature, nor imagined any meanings for them, and rather believed in them by way of submission and trust, and engaged in work and left search. Those are the safe among the companions of the right hand, versus these of imaginations, who belong to the straying ones. The third class are the Gnostics who are knowledgeable of the realities and facts, and those are the nearest to Allah Almighty.

Allah Almighty mentioned those three classes in His statement: "And you shall be sorted out into three classes. Then (there will be) the Companions of the

Right Hand; what will be the Companions of the Right Hand? And the Companions of the Left Hand; what will be the Companions of the Left Hand? And those Foremost (in Faith) will be foremost (in the Hereafter). These will be those Nearest to Allah." (Al-Waqi'ah 7-11)

﴿ وَكُنتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَٰثَةً ۝ فَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ ۝ وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ ۝ وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ۝ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۝ ﴾

He Almighty mentioned their states in detail, and then said: " Thus, then, if he be of those Nearest to Allah, (There is for him) Rest and Satisfaction, and a Garden of Delights. And if he be of the Companions of the Right Hand, (For him is the salutation), "Peace be unto you," from the Companions of the Right Hand. And if he be of those who treat (Truth) as Falsehood, who go wrong, For him is Entertainment with Boiling Water, And burning in Hell-Fire." (Al-Waqi'ah91:94)

﴿ فَسَلَٰمٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ ۝ وَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ۝ فَنُزُلٌ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ۝ وَتَصْلِيَةُ جَحِيمٍ ۝ ﴾

Both the layman and the insightful share in the love for Allah Almighty, as being the Creator and Lord of all the worlds. But the insightful contemplates the wonders of the making of Allah Almighty, which astounds his mind and puts him to astonishment, and increases the greatness, glory, majesty and perfection of attributes of Allah Almighty in his heart, thereupon he increases in love for Him. The more one knows and perceives of the wonders and marvels of the making of Allah Almighty, the more he attests the glory, majesty and perfection of Allah Almighty, and the more he increases in gnosis and love for Him. To be sure, the ocean of this kind of gnosis, i.e. the knowledge of the wonders of the making of Allah Almighty, is endless, which means that the disparity of Gnostics in their love also is endless.

The disparity of love also might go back to the difference of the five causes we have mentioned for love: whoever loves Allah, for example, for He does good to, and confers favors upon him, and not for the sake of Him only, his love is weak for it changes by the change of the good that he receives. Of a surety, his love in the state of trial and distress differs from his love in the state of pleasure and satisfaction. But whoever loves Him for the sake of Him only, as He deserves love because of His perfection, glory, beauty and grandeur, his love remains unchangeable, for it is not subject to the different states of good he receives. This is why people are different in their love. Of a surety, the disparity in love leads to disparity in happiness of the hereafter. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " but verily the Hereafter is more in rank and gradation and more in excellence." (Al-Isra' 21)

﴿ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلَلْءَاخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَٰتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا ۝ ﴾

CHAPTER EIGHT

EXPOSITION OF WHY PEOPLE'S MINDS FALL SHORT OF GNOSIS OF ALLAH ALMIGHTY

It should be known to you that the most evident and the most apparent in existence is Allah Almighty, and this requires that gnosis of Him should be the first to occur to minds, and be easier upon understanding. But it is the opposite of that which is observable. So, it is necessary to explicate the cause that lies behind it.

To be sure, the existence of Allah Almighty, His power, knowledge, perfection, glory, majesty, and all of His attributes are attested by all that is visible and perceptible by the external and internal senses, like the heavens, the earth, the trees, the mountains, the plants, the stones, the oceans, the planets, the stars, etc. Moreover, the first testimony to it comes from our own selves and bodies with their attributes and characteristics, our changing states and turning hearts, and our movement from stage to another, and so on. The most evident things to our knowledge is our selves, and then the external perceptibles that under our five senses, and those under our mind and insight. Each of those perceptibles have only one sense, one indication and one testimony. But all that is in the universe are indications and testimonies to the existence of their Creator, Manipulator, Mover, and Disposer, and to His power, knowledge, perfection and wisdom. The perceptible existents are beyond calculation and measure. Each atom in existence confirms that it does not exist nor move by itself, but it needs to such as brings it to existence and then moves it.

That is attested first by the composition of our bodies from bone, flesh, blood and nerves, in a marvelous and miraculous way that is beyond the reach of the power of any human being to imitate or even understand entirely. Of a surety, we know, for certain, that this is not composed by itself, in so much as it needs to a composer. Since there is nothing in universe, be it abstract or concrete, present or absent, but that it is a testimony and evidence for Allah's grandeur and perfection, minds have been dazzled and confounded from perceiving that.

What our minds fall short of perceiving goes back to two causes: the first is its being extremely hidden and abstruse, and this matter is self-evident. The other is its being extremely clear and apparent. Its example is like the pat which sees at night and fails to see during the day, due to the extreme clarity and appearance of the daylight, for the pat's sight is very weak and thus is affected and dazzled by the sunlight when sunrises, for the strength of clarity with the weakness of its sight causes it to fail to see. We do not see a thing unless light is mixed with darkness in a way that makes weak its emergence. Similarly, our minds are weak, and the beauty and glory of Divine presence are in the utmost degree of brightness and clarity, illumination and rising, comprehension and perfection, to the extent that no atom in the dominion of the heavens and the earth escapes from His emergence. In this way, His emergence is a cause of His concealment. Glorified be Allah Who has been veiled by the rising of His light, and been hidden from sights by the emergence of His glory and majesty.

One should not wonder at anything's being hidden because of its being

apparent, for things seem clear on the light of their opposites. Such as whose existence is too comprehensive and perfect to have an opposite, its perception is very difficult. If things are different, their difference would indicate to each other, unlike the case of similarity, in which perception becomes difficult. The example of that is the light of the sun that rises on earth. We know that it is an accident that occurs in the earth and then vanishes when sun disappears. Were sun to rise forever and never sets, we would have thought that bodies have no definite forms other than their colours, i.e. whiteness and blackness, and what is between them. We do not see in the black but the blackness, and in the white but the whiteness. But as for light itself, we do not perceive it alone. But when sun disappears and it becomes dark, we come to know the difference between both states. We learn that bodies are illuminated by the sunlight, which gives them a characteristic different from that they acquire when sun sets. Thus, we know the existence of light from its absence, and but for its absence, it would have been very difficult for us to know that. That is because we see things similar to and not different from each other during darkness and light, given that light makes visible all perceptibles since with it all things are perceived.

Sun then is self-evident, and it makes visible all things. Consider then how it becomes abstruse because of its emergence, unless its opposite occurs upon it. Allah Almighty, therefore, is the most evident and the most apparent, and with Him all things are made apparent and visible. Were He to become absent or disappear or change (for a moment like such creatures as sun), Exalted be Allah from that, the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all things in existence would have ceased to function, and people then would have come to know the difference between both cases. Similarly, were some things to exist by Him and some by another one else, you also would have come to know the difference between both things. But since all things exist by Him Alone, and thus indicate to the existence of Him alone, and His existence is eternally permanent and it is impossible to otherwise imagine, such utmost degree of emergence led to concealment. That is why minds fall short of understanding.

But whoever has his insight strong does not see, in case he is in his normal state, nothing in existence but Allah Almighty. His acts are but traces of His power and will. They do not exist in reality, for the real existence is for the One and Only, with Whom all acts exist. Whoever is in such a state does not look at an act but that he sees the Actor and Maker, and do not regard the act itself as being the heavens, earth, animals and trees, in so much as being the making of the One and Real. In this way, his sight does not go beyond Him. All the world is but the composition of Allah Almighty. Whoever regards it from this perspective, i.e. as being the making and composition of Allah Almighty, and knows that it is the act of Allah Almighty, and loves it simply because it is the act of Allah Almighty, he indeed does neither see nor know nor love but Allah Almighty. That is the real monotheist who does not see but Allah Almighty. He does not look at himself but as being one of the servants of Allah Almighty. It is that who consumes himself in monotheism.

Those matters are known to those endued with deep and strong insights. But

they are abstruse only for minds fall short of understanding and perceiving them, and the religious scholars fail to clarify and explicate to be understandable enough to the people, or because they engage in themselves and think that it does not matter them to explicate those issues. This is why minds fall short of having gnosis of Allah Almighty.

Additionally, all the perceptibles that attest the existence of Allah Almighty are perceived by man from the early childhood, i.e. before the age of discernment. Then, the instinct of reasoning grows in him step by step, while he is involved in his desires and lusts, and affable with his perceptibles, whose impact thus vanishes from his heart. For this reason, if he sees, all of a sudden, a strange animal, plant or a supernatural act of Allah Almighty, his tongue would soon speak with gnosis saying: "Exalted be Allah!" but even, although he sees, during night and day, the parts of his body, animals, plants, and all things familiar to him, which all attest the existence of Allah Almighty, he does not sense their testimony due to his long intimacy with them.

Suppose that there is a blind mature rational man, and suddenly the covering of darkness is removed from his sight, and his sight stretches towards the sky, the earth, the trees and the animals and their like, all at once, his mind might likely be confounded by his great astonishment of the numerous testimonies of these wonders of the existence of their Creator.

This, and its like of causes, in addition to man's involvement in desires and lusts have impeded people from seeking light with the light of gnosis. People, in their pursuit of the gnosis of Allah Almighty, are like the astounded man who searches for his donkey, though he is riding it. If a very evident thing is pursued, it would turn abstruse. That is the mystery which lies behind this matter. So, it should be investigated with verification.

CHAPTER NINE

EXPOSITION OF MEANING OF LONGING FOR ALLAH ALMIGHTY

It should be known to you that whoever denies the reality of love for Allah Almighty, should, necessarily, deny the reality of longing for Him, since longing could not be imagined but for a beloved, and we affirm the existence of longing for Allah Almighty, to which the Gnostic is forced, by way of consideration and vision through the lights of insights, and by way of transmission through the narrations and traditions about it.

As for the way of consideration and vision, what has previously been mentioned to affirm love is sufficient to affirm longing here. Of a surety, every lover has longing for his beloved in his absence. If he is present, no doubt, he would have no longing for him. Longing is only for that which is absent. To explicate it, longing is imagined to be for a thing that is perceived in part and not perceived in another part. But as for what is not perceived at all, there is no longing for it. If one does neither see nor hear about somebody, he would not have longing for him at all. Similarly, there is no longing for a thing that is perceived entirely, given that the perfect perception is achieved by vision. Whoever sees his beloved regularly is not imagined to have longing for him. That is because, as we have mentioned, longing pertains to that which is perceived in

part and not perceived in part. This could not be made clear, from two perspectives, but through an example from the reality:

Let's say that if one has his beloved absent from him, and only his image remains in his mind, he needs to perfect this image with vision. If his image, remembrance and knowledge are removed from his mind, to the extent that he comes to forget him, he is imagined to have no longing for him at all. Were he to see him regularly, he is not imagined to have longing for him at the moment of vision. Longing then means that he desires to perfect and complete his image with vision. Similarly, he might seen him in darkness in a way that does not allow him to seem clear to him, thereupon he needs to complete that defective vision in the rising light.

The second is that he might see only the face of his beloved, and does not see his hair or any aspect of his beauty, and thus he has longing for seeing them, even if he has not already seen them at all, nor formed a true image within himself resulting from his vision. But he knows that his beloved has beautiful parts of his body, and since he does not perceive the details of their beauty with vision, he has longing for uncovering what he has not seen.

Both perspectives are imaginable for Allah Almighty, and necessarily inherent in the sight of the Gnostics. What appears to the Gnostics from the Divine matters, regardless of being extremely clear and evident, seems as if it were from behind a thin screen. This means that it does not seem extremely clear in their sight in so much as stained with the effects of their imaginations, for imaginations in this world never weary to imitate and represent the data given to them. They indeed, by so doing, embitter and contaminate gnosis. Add to that the engagements of this world. To be sure, the perfect clarity is achieved by contemplation and complete rising emergence, which would be possible only in the hereafter. This requires necessary longing, for it is the highest beloved of the Gnostics. This is one of two kinds of longing, i.e. to perfect clarity in what seems clear to some extent.

The other is that the Divine matters are infinite, and what is revealed to every servant is only some of them, and there remains abstruse infinite matters which the Gnostics know that they exist and are known to Allah Almighty, as well as the Gnostic knows, for certain, that what is absent from his mind of information is much more than what is available to him. Thus, he remains in longing for getting knowledge of what he has not acquired of the remaining information that he has never known, whether in abstruseness or in clarity.

The first longing ends in the hereafter with what is called meeting, vision and contemplation. It is not imagined to be appeased in this world. In this issue, it is reported that Ibrahim Ibn Adham was one of those who had longing. He related: One day, I said: "O Lord! Should you give one of Your lovers what appeases his heart before meeting You, then, give it to me, for worry has harmed me so much." He resumed: I saw in a dream as if He made me stand in front of Him and He said to me: "O Ibrahim! Have you not felt shy of asking Me to give you what appeases your heart before you meet Me? Should the longing of the lover be appeased before meeting his beloved?" I said: "O Lord! I have wandered in

Your love and have not known what to say. So, please, forgive for me, and teach me what to say." He said: "Say: 'O Allah! Make me satisfied with Your fate, persevere on Your trial, and give thanks for Your favor', for this longing would be appeased only in the hereafter."

As for the second longing, it seems to be endless either in the world or in the hereafter. That is because its end is to be revealed to the servant in the hereafter of Allah's glory, majesty, wisdom, acts and attributes what is known to Allah Almighty; and this is impossible, for it is infinite and endless. The servant continues to know that there remains of glory, beauty and majesty what has not been made clear to him. This means that his longing is never appeased, particularly if he is of those who sees many degrees over his own. But it is a longing for the perfection of connection, given that the connection itself is present, for which he has pleasant longing in which he experiences neither pain nor trouble. It is not unlikely that the subtleties of revelation are endlessly consecutive, and this means that bliss and pleasure continue to increase forever. The pleasure of the new subtleties of bliss engages one from the sense of longing for what he has not got, provided that revelation of what he has not got in this world is possible, otherwise, the bliss would continue forever, but with no increase.

To this refers the statement of Allah Almighty: " Their Light will run forward before them and by their right hands, while they say, "Our Lord! Perfect our Light for us, and grant us Forgiveness: for You have power over all things."" (At-Tahrim 8)

﴿ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَـٰنِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَآ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٨) ﴾

It means that one would have his light perfected so long as he gets the light itself from this world. In confirmation of that, He Almighty said: " One Day will the Hypocrites - men and women - say to the Believers: "Wait for us! let us borrow (a light) from your Light!" it will be said: "Turn you back to your rear! then seek a light (where you can)!"" (Al-Hadid 13)

﴿ يَوْمَ يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقُونَ وَٱلْمُنَـٰفِقَـٰتُ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱنظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِن نُّورِكُمْ قِيلَ ٱرْجِعُوا۟ وَرَآءَكُمْ فَٱلْتَمِسُوا۟ نُورًا (١٣) ﴾

However, any judgement in this matter is based on probabilities and assumptions, and no reliable judgement is possible. So, we ask Allah Almighty to increase us in knowledge and guidance, and show us the truth as truth, and help us follow it. This amount of the lights of insights is sufficient for disclosing the realities and meanings of longing.

As for the quotations from Prophetic narrations and traditions, they are beyond calculation. The following famous supplication is reported from The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Allah! I ask You to endow me with contentment after fate, abundance of living after death, pleasure of looking at Your Bounteous Countenance, and longing for Your meeting." (Ahmad and Al-Hakim).

It is also reported that Abu Ad-Darda' said to Ka'b "Allah be pleased with

them",: "Tell me about the most unique Verse" i.e. in the Torah. He said: Allah Almighty says: 'The longing of the dutiful for meeting Me has increased so much, and My longing for meeting them is stronger.' Besides it, the following is written: 'Whoever demands Me would find Me, and whoever demands anyone else would not find Me.'" On that Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him", said; "I testify that I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying so."

It is narrated that Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "O David! Tell the inhabitants of the earth that I am a lover of him who loves Me, a sitter of him who sits with Me, a remover of loneliness of him who is affable with My remembrance, a companion of him who seeks my company, a chooser of him who chooses Me, and an obedient of him who obeys Me. No servant loves Me, with certainty from the depth of his heart but that I choose him for Myself, and love him more than anyone of My creatures. Whoever demands Me in truth finds Me, and whoever demands anyone else other than Me finds Me not. So, O inhabitants of the earth! Give up the arrogance and deception of the world you live in, and rather stick to My company and sitting with Me, and become affable with Me, so that I would hasten to remove your loneliness, and love you. I created My lovers from the same clay from which I created Abraham, My bosom friend, Moses to whom I spoke direct, and Muhammad, My chosen and selected. I also created the hearts of those who have longing for Me from My light, and blessed them in My glory."

It is reported from one of the righteous predecessors that Allah Almighty revealed to a sincere master and affirmer of truth the following: "I have servants who love Me as well as I love them, have longing for Me as well as I have longing for them, remember me as well as I remember them, and look at Me as well as I look at them. If you imitate them, I would love you; and if you deviate from them, I would hate you." He asked: "O Lord! What is their distinctive sign?" He said: "They care about shades during the day in the same way as the merciful shepherd takes care of his sheep, and incline to sunset in the same way as a bird inclines to its nest when sun sets. When night falls, darkness prevails, beds are prepared, and each lover becomes in private with his beloved, they would soon hold their feet in standing before Me, and spread their faces (on the ground in prayer) for Me, talk with Me in private with My speech, and praise Me for My favors on them, with some of them weeping, some crying, some complaining, some moaning, some standing, some sitting, some bowing and some prostrating. I see with My eyes what they suffer for My Sake, and hear what they complain of My love. My first gift I would give them would be three things: I would cast of My light into their hearts, thereupon they would tell about Me as well as I would tell about them; second, if the heavens and the earth, with what they contain, are to be placed in their balances of deeds, I would regard them not sufficient for them; the third, I would turn to them with My Face, and none would know what I like to give anyone of them to whom I turn with My Face."

It is reported from David "peace be upon him" that Allah Almighty revealed to him: "O David! To which time would you remember Paradise and do not ask

longing for Me?" He said: "O Lord! Who are those who have longing for You?" He said: "Those who have longing for Me are those whom I have purified from every kind of impurity, alerted with caution, and made their hearts exposed directly to Me, through which they look at Me. I carry their hearts and place them on My heaven, and then call the intelligent among My angels and when they assemble, they fall in prostration to Me, thereupon I say to them: "I have not called you to fall in prostration to Me, but rather I have called you to show you the hearts of those who have longing for Me, and commend you to these who have longing for Me. Their hearts indeed illuminate in My heaven to My angels, just as sun rises to the inhabitants of the earth. O David! I created the hearts of those who have longing for Me from My good pleasure, blessed them in the light of My Countenance, and took them for Myself to talk to, made their bodies the places where to look at the earth, and carved from their hearts a way to look through it at My Face, and thus their longing for Me increases everyday."

David "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! Show me your lovers." He said: "O David! Come to the mount of Lebanon where you would find fourteen persons from different ages. When you come to them, greet them on My behalf and say to them: "Your Lord salutes you, and says to you: 'Do you have any need from Me? You are My lovers, chosen and allies. I rejoice for your joy and hasten to love you.' Then, David "peace be upon him" went to them and found them sitting on a spring, in meditation and reflection of the greatness and grandeur of Allah Almighty. When they saw David "peace be upon him" they got up to disperse from him, thereupon he said to them: "I am the Messenger of Allah to you. I have come to you to convey to you a message from your Lord." When they heard that, they came to him, paid attention to his speech, and lowered their sights down to the ground. David "peace be upon him" said to them: "I am the Messenger of Allah to you. I have come to convey His greeting to you and inform you that He says to you: 'Do you not have any need from Me? Do you not call Me so that I answer your call? You indeed are My lovers, chosen and allies. I rejoice for your joy and hasten to love you, and look at your faces every moment in the same way as a merciful mother looks at her babes.'" Then, tears flowed over their faces, and they started to speak one after the other:

Their old man said: "Exalted be You (O Allah)! Exalted be You (O Allah)! We are Your servants, and the sons of Your servants. Please, forgive for us our not celebrating You in the past."

Another one said: "Exalted be You (O Allah)! Exalted be You (O Allah)! We are Your servants, and the sons of Your servants. Confer upon us with the good vision in what is between You and us."

The third said: "Exalted be You (O Allah)! Exalted be You (O Allah)! We are Your servants, and the sons of Your servants. Could we dare to invoke You given that we have no need for the sake of ourselves. So please, make us permanently stick to the way to You, and perfect for us Your favor on us."

The fourth said: "We fall short of seeking Your good pleasure. So, please, help us on ourselves with Your generosity and bounty."

The fifth said: "You created us from a dropped sperm and conferred upon us

the favor of meditation in Your greatness and grandeur. So, could anyone engaged in meditation of Your greatness and glory dare to speak in anything else? We just ask to bring us close to Your light."

The sixth said: "Our tongues have wearied to invoke You due to Your grandeur and majesty, Your closeness to Your allies, and Your great favors on those who love You."

The seventh said: "You guided our hearts to celebrate Your praises, and devoted us to engage in You. So please, forgive for us our indulgence in giving thanks to You for all of this."

The eighth said: "You have known our need. It is just to look at Your Bounteous Countenance."

The ninth said: "How could a servant dare to exceed his limits before his Master? You commanded us to supplicate You with Your generosity and bounty. So please, grant us light to be guided in the darkness from the firmaments of the heavens."

The tenth said: "We invoke You to turn with Your face to us, and be with us forever."

The eleventh said: "We ask You to perfect Your favor upon us in what You granted to us out of Your bounty."

The twelfth said: "We have no need for anyone of Your creatures. So please, grant us with the favor of looking at the beauty of Your Countenance."

The thirteenth said: "I, from among them, ask You to make me blind from seeing the world with its inhabitants, and my heart from engagement in the hereafter."

The fourteenth said: "I have known that You, Exalted and Blessed be You, love Your allies. So please, grant us with the favor of engagement in You from all things."

Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "Tell them that 'I heard your speech and responded to what you like. So, leave each other, and let each one of you take for himself a tunnel: I am going to remove the veil that is between Me and you until you would be able to look at My light and glory.'" David "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! By which thing have they attained that honor from You?" He said: "By their good assumption, abstention from this world with its people, wholehearted devotion to Me and talking to me in private. To be sure, this rank is attained only by him who rejects this world and its people, devotes his heart to me Alone, and gives me preference over all of My creatures. At this point, I sympathize for him, purify himself, and remove the veil that is between Me and him, until he is able to look at Me in the same way as a beholder looks at a visible thing. I also show him My honor every moment, and bring him close to the light of My Countenance. If he falls ill, I nurse him in the same way as a merciful mother nurses her babe; and if he is thirsty, I would water him and make him taste the flavor of My remembrance. Once I do this with him, O David, I make his soul blind from this world with its people, and his heart from loving it, so that he never wearies to engage in remembering Me. He asks me to hasten his death to come to Me, whereas I dislike to send him to death for he is,

from among My creatures, the place of my vision: I see none but him, and he sees none but Me. Would that you see him, O David, while his soul has been melted, his body lean, his organs crashed, and his heart removed once he hears about Me. I commend him to My angels and the inhabitants of My heavens, while he increases in fear and worship. By My Honor and Glory, I would make him abide in the highest part of Paradise, and quench his thirst of looking at My Countenance until he is satisfied."

It is also reported from David "peace be upon him" that Allah Almighty revealed to him: "Tell My servants who devote themselves wholeheartedly to Me in love the following message: 'What harm would you receive if I veil Myself from My creatures, and remove the veil that is between Me and you, until you see Me with the eyes of your hearts? What harm would you receive from such of world as I keep away from you so long as I spread My religion for you? What harm would you receive from the displeasure of the people with you if you seek My good pleasure with you?'

It is further reported from David "peace be upon him" that Allah Almighty revealed to him: "You claim you love Me. So, if you really love Me, then, take the love for this world out of your heart, for the love for Me and for it never gather together in one heart. O David! Be sincere in love for Me, and mix with the inhabitants of this world. Stick to what seems to you to agree with My love. I would give you before you ask Me, and aid you against the difficulties. I have taken oath on Myself not to reward but a servant whom I know to love and have longing for Me, and that nothing avails him from Me. If you are so, I would remove humiliation and loneliness from You and place satisfaction in your heart. The gnosis of Me is infinite and endless, and once you ask Me for increase, I soon increase you with no limit.

It should be known to you, O child of Israel, that there is no relationship between Me and anyone of My servants. So, let them strengthen their desire and wish for Me, I soon give them that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard about, and which has never occurred to the mind of any human being. Put Me in front of you and see Me with the sight of your heart and not with your eye that is in your head. I have taken oath on Myself not to give My reward to a servant who entered into My obedience just by way of experiment and procrastination. Behave humbly towards those whom you know, and do not be arrogant over the beginners on the path to Me. If those who love Me know the position of the beginners on the path to Me in My sight, they would make themselves the ground on which they walk.

O David! It is better for you to deliver a beginner on the path to Me from a difficulty, so that I would write you a Mujahid, and whomever I enlist as a Mujahid, he suffers no loneliness nor want of anyone of the creatures. O David! Stick to My speech, and take from yourself to yourself, and do not make it a point for others to come to you through it, lest I would veil from you My love. Do not make My servants despair of My mercy. Devote your desire to Me Alone. I indeed made desires permissible just for the weakness of mankind. What is the matter with the strong that they get their desires in this world, given

that it decreases the sweetness of their private talk with Me? The least punishment I have prepared for the strong for their worldly desires is that I veil their minds from Me. I do not approve the world for My beloved, whom I deem far beyond it. O David! Make not between Me and you a world to veil you from My love. Those cut the way on My servants who seek Me. Seek the aid of permanent fasting on giving up desires. O David! Be lovable to Me by being enemy to yourself. Withhold desires from it perchance I would look at you (with the eye of mercy and love), and the veils between Me and you would be removed."

It is also narrated that the following was revealed to David "peace be upon him": "O David! Were these who turn back from me to know how I am waiting in expectation for them, kind and merciful to them, and have longing for them to leave sins and misdeeds, they would die out of longing for Me, and their joints would be cut off out of love for Me.

O David! This is my will concerning those who turn back from Me. What do you think My will to be concerning those who devote themselves to Me? O David! The servant is in the direst need for Me when he dispenses with Me; and I am the most merciful to My servant when he turns back from Me; and he is the most glorious and the most dignified in My sight when he turns to Me (in repentance)."

Those traditions and their like, which are beyond calculation, affirm love, longing for, and intimacy with Allah Almighty. But the verification of its meaning is uncovered only by what has already been mentioned.

CHAPTER TEN

EXPOSITION OF ALLAH'S LOVE FOR SERVANT, AND ITS MEANING

It should be known to you that the evidences from the Holy Qur'an confirm Allah's love for His servants. So, it is necessary for us to explain its meaning. But let's first present the quotations from the Holy Quran. Allah Almighty said: " O you who believe! if any from among you turn back from his Faith, soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him." (Al-Ma'idah 54)

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِى ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ ﴾

And: "Truly Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure." (As-Saff 4)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُم بُنْيَـٰنٌ مَّرْصُوصٌ ﴾

And: "Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean." (Al-Baqarah 222)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلتَّوَّٰبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴾

When Both the Jews and the Christians say: "We are sons of Allah, and His beloved." He Almighty said in reply to them: "Why then does He punish you for your sins?" (Al-Ma'idah 18)

﴿ وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ وَٱلنَّصَـٰرَىٰ نَحْنُ أَبْنَـٰٓؤُا۟ ٱللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّـٰٓؤُهُۥ ۚ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُم بِذُنُوبِكُم ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" from the

Prophet "peace be upon him" that he said: "Indeed, if Allah Almighty loves a servant, no sin he commits shall harm him; and the one who repents from a sin is like him who has never committed a sin." Then, he recited the following statement of Allah: " Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean." (Al-Baqarah 222)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلتَّوَّٰبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾ ﴾

(Sahib Al-Firdaws and Ibn Majah on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud). it means that if Allah Almighty loves a servant, he accepts his repentance before death and this requires that the sins he has committed in the past shall not harm him, no matter how much they might be, just as the past disbelief never harms one when he reverts to Islam. Allah Almighty made it requisite for love to forgive sins as confirmed by His statement: " Say: "If you do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Al Imran 31)

﴿ قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

It is further reported that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty gives this world to whomever He loves and whomever He loves not, but He never gives faith except to whomever He loves." (Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud.(

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever humbles himself before Allah Almighty, Allah raises him (in degree); and whoever is arrogant to Allah Almighty, Allah lowers him (in rank); and whoever celebrates and remembers Allah more often, Allah loves him." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri).

It is also narrated that The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah says: 'My servant keeps on coming closer to Me through supererogatory deeds till I love him, so I become his sense of hearing with which he hears, his sense of sight with which he sees, his hand with which he grips, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks Me, I will give him, and if he asks My protection (Refuge), I will protect him; (i.e. give him My Refuge) and I do not hesitate to do anything as I hesitate to take the soul of the believer, for he hates death, and I hate to disappoint him.'" (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

It is reported on the authority of Zaid Ibn Aslam that he said: "Allah Almighty loves the servant to the extent that He says to him: 'Do what you like, for I have forgiven for you.'"

The narrations and traditions about the love of Allah for His servants are beyond calculation.

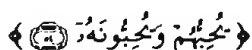
We have already mentioned that the servant's love for Allah Almighty is real and not allegoric. Love, in language, is that a soul inclines to such of things as agrees with its disposition and nature, unlike attachment which is the excessive overwhelming inclination to a thing. We have also showed that doing good agrees with the nature and disposition, and so is beauty; and both beauty and doing of good might sometimes be perceived by the sight and sometimes by the insight,

and love follows each, for it is not unique to the sight on the exclusion of the insight.

But Allah's love for the servant is not like this in principle. More even, if all names are attributed to Allah Almighty as well as to the creatures, they would not give the same meaning. Take, for example, the term 'existence', which is the most common name: it does not give the same meaning when it is attributed to the Creator and the creature. The existence of all things other than Allah Almighty is taken from the existence of Allah Almighty, and by no means could the resulting existence be equal to the followed existence. It is unlike the case in which both the tree and the horse share in the term 'body'. Their being bodies is common to both without the body of any of them being taken from the other. This quite difference in names appears more evident in such names as power, will, and knowledge, in which the Creator is not similar to the creature at all.

Love, in language, as we have mentioned, is that a soul inclines to what agrees with its nature and disposition. This notion is imagined to apply to an imperfect soul, which inclines to what agrees with it, therewith it perfects itself and gets pleasure in attaining it. This is impossible in relation with Allah Almighty, for all perfection, beauty, glory, excellence, majesty, brilliance, etc, is imagined to be permanent and everlasting only for the Lord Almighty, in the sense that it is not imagined to be renewed or removed. For this reason, He has no care about anything or anyone else as being another than Him, in so much as about His essence and acts only. There is nothing in existence other than His essence and acts.

For this reason, when it was recited: "Whom He will love as they will love Him" (Al-Ma'idah 54)

﴿يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

To Abu Sa'id Al-Maihani "may Allah have mercy upon him", he said: "Do He really love them? He does not love but Himself." He refers to the fact that He is the whole, and there is nothing in existence other than Himself. Whoever loves himself, his acts, essence and composition, his love never goes beyond himself and its appurtenances.

He Almighty then loves none but Himself, and all narrations about His love for His servants should be construed as allegoric and not literal. Its meaning is to remove the veil from his heart in order for him to be able to see Him well with his heart, and bring him close to His presence, and this is decreed for whomever He likes in eternity. Thus, His love for whomever He loves is eternal if it is attributed to the eternal will which enables that servant to follow the right way to come close to Him. But if it is attributed to the act therewith He removes the veil from the heart of His servant, it is then occurrent, in the sense that it occurs by the occurrence of the cause that requires it, as confirmed by Allah in His statement as related by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "My servant keeps on coming closer to Me through supererogatory deeds till I love him." Thus, his closeness with the help of supererogatory deeds is a cause of the purity of his inside, the removal of the veil from his heart, and

coming close to the presence of his Lord Almighty. All of this is out of Allah's act and kindness for His servant; and this is the significance of His love for him.

If Allah Almighty loves a servant, He does not love him for he agrees with His disposition, Exalted and Hallowed be Allah from all of that, nor to get benefit from him. But He loves him for he has of pleasing manners and praiseworthy qualities what makes him entitled to come close to the presence of Allah Almighty. The beloved of Allah Almighty then is he who is close to Him. The closer a servant is to the presence of Allah Almighty, the farther he is from the beastly, devilish and brutal qualities, as much as he is I close to the Divine manners and qualities. In this way, it is closeness by attributes and not by place. Whoever was not close and then came to be close, has changed. By the occurrence of closeness, it might be thought that this change applies to the servant and the Lord equally; and of course, it is impossible in relation with the Lord Almighty. This change is possible only for the servant and not for the Lord, Who remains in perfection and glory as He is in eternity.

For example, if two persons like to be close to each other, there are two ways to do so: Either both of them move to each other, or one of them moves towards the other who, in turn, remains stationary. This means that closeness has occurred by a change in the one who moved, and not in the other. The same applies also to the closeness in attributes. The pupil seeks to be close to his mister in degree of perfection and beauty of knowledge, while the mister remains in his degree of perfection and beauty of his knowledge, and does not move down to the degree of his pupil, while the pupil remains in movement and promotion from the bottom of ignorance to the summit of knowledge until he becomes close to his mister in the degree of knowledge. In this way the promotion of the servant in the degrees of closeness should be understood. The more one becomes perfect in attributes, encompassing of the knowledge of the truth of matters, stronger in oppressing Satan and curbing desires, and abstaining from vices, the closer he becomes to the degree of perfection; and the utmost degree of perfection is unique to Allah Alone, and each one becomes close to Allah Almighty in proportion to the degree of perfection he attains.

It is true that the pupil might be very close to his mister, equal to and even excel him in many cases, but this is quite impossible in relation with Allah Almighty. That is because the perfection of Allah Almighty is infinite, whereas the degrees of perfection available to the servant are limited. For this reason, he should have no hope of attaining equality in it. Moreover, the degrees of closeness vary endlessly , for the perfection is infinite and endless.

In sum, Allah's love for His servant is to bring him close to His presence, by averting all worldly engagements and sins from him, and purifying his soul from the impurities and stains of this world, and removing the veil from his heart until he contemplates Him as if he sees Him with his heart,.

The servant's love for Allah Almighty is to incline to attain that degree of perfection of which he has short and lacking. This means that he has longing for getting what he lacks, and if he attains anything thereof, he takes pleasure

in it. Both love and longing, in this meaning, are impossible in relation with Allah Almighty.

You may argue: "But in this meaning, Allah's love for the servant is puzzling. Then, how should a servant know that he is the beloved of Allah Almighty?" in reply to this, let me say that he should know this by the signs that indicate to it. Here, I quote the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "If Allah Almighty loves a servant, He puts him to trial, and if He loves him with the utmost degree of love, He chooses him (for Himself)." It was said: "What is to choose him (for Himself)?" He "peace be upon him" said: "He leaves for him neither family nor property." (Sahib Al-Firdaws on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talib).

The sign of Allah's love for His servant then is to make him in solitude, and impede him from anything else other than Him Almighty.

It was said to Jesus "peace be upon him": "Why do you not buy a donkey to ride?" he said: "I am too dear to Allah Almighty to make me engage from Him with a donkey."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If Allah Almighty loves a servant, He puts him to trial, and if he perseveres, He chooses him, and if he is pleased, He selects him (for Himself)."

According to a religious scholar: "If you love Him, and He puts you to trial, you should know then that He purifies you to select you (for Himself)." One of the beginners on the path to Allah said to his mister: "I have experienced a portion of love (from Allah Almighty)." He asked him: "O my son! Have He tried you with a beloved over which you gave Him Almighty preference?" He answered in the negative, thereupon he said: "Then, have no hope of love, for He never gives it to anyone until He puts him to trial."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If Allah Almighty loves a servant, he assigns to him a preacher and deterrent from himself to enjoin good upon him, and forbid him to do evil." (This is reported by Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Umm Salamah).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "If Allah Almighty intends good for a servant, He lets him know his own defects and shortcomings." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Anas). One of the most characteristic signs is one's love for Allah Almighty, which indicates to the love of Allah for him.

As for the act indicative of his being loved, it is that Allah Almighty undertakes all of his affairs, outwardly and inwardly, secretly and openly, in such a way as He becomes his counselor, disposer, improver of his morals, mover of his organs and parts of body, grantor of success to him externally and internally, gatherer of all his concerns into only one concern, causer of this world and its things to be hateful in his sight, and of anyone else to be unfamiliar to him, eliminator of his loneliness by virtue of the pleasure of the private talk with Him in his solitudes, and remover of veils that are between him and the gnosis of Allah Almighty.

These and their like are the signs of Allah's love for the servant. Let's us now

mention the signs of the servant's love for Allah Almighty, since they are a part of Allah's love for him.

CHAPTER ELEVEN
EXPOSITION OF SIGNS OF SERVANT'S LOVE FOR ALLAH ALMIGHTY

It should be known to you that love is claimed by anyone, and how easy it is to claim, and how difficult it is to realize. So, man should not be deceived by Satan's dissembling and self trickery when it claims love for Allah Almighty, unless it is tried with signs and demanded to affirm that love with proofs and evidences. Love is a good tree whose root is well-established in the ground, branches are in the sky, and fruits appear in both the heart, tongue and organs. Its overflowing traces on the heart, tongue and organs indicate to love in the same way as smoke to fire and fruits to trees. They are numerous.

Among them is the love to meet the beloved by way of revelation and vision in the abode of peace. It is not imagined that heart loves a beloved and does not like to see and meet him. If he knows that there is no access to him unless he leaves this world by death, he should like death and not flee from it. It is not heavy nor difficult on the lover to leave his homeland for wherever his beloved resides in order to be blessed in seeing him. Death is the key to meet one's beloved and the doorway to enter into the world of vision.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever likes to meet Allah Almighty, Allah likes to meet him." (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah and A'ishah).

When death approached Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him" he said: "(An appointment with) a beloved has come at a time one is in dire need for him: not prosperous is he who shows regrets (for death)."

One of the righteous predecessors said: "There is no characteristic Allah Almighty likes to be in a servant, after the love for meeting Allah, more than to fall in prostration (to Allah in prayer) more often." Thus, the love for meeting Allah Almighty has been given priority over prostration.

Allah Almighty made it requisite for the truthfulness and sincerity in love for Him to fight and be killed in the Way of Allah. People claimed that they love Allah, thereupon He Almighty made fighting and being killed in His Way and pursue of martyrdom a sign for His love. In confirmation of that, He Almighty said: " Truly Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure." (As-Saff 4)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُم بُنْيَـٰنٌ مَّرْصُوصٌ ﴾

He further said: " they fight in His Cause, and slay and are slain." (At-Tawbah 111)

﴿ يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ ﴾

In his bequest to Umar "Allah be pleased with him" Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Although truth is heavy, it is, regardless of its heaviness, blissful; and although falsehood is light, it is, regardless of its lightness, detrimental. If you observe my bequest, then, nothing will become dearer to you than death which would inevitably approach you; and if you waste my bequest,

nothing will become more hateful to you than death, which you would never overpower."

It is narrated on the authority of Ishaq Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas that his father Sa'd "Allah be pleased with him" told him from Abdullah Ibn Jahsh "Allah be pleased with him" that on the day of the holy battle of Uhud, he said to him: "Should we not invoke Allah?" they moved aside and Abdullah Ibn Jahsh invoked Allah saying: "O Lord! I swear that if I meet the enemy tomorrow You should make me face a strong and hardy man, whom I fight in Your Cause, and he fights me, and then kills me and cuts off my nose and ear, and splits open my belly, until when I meet You, You would ask me: "O Abdullah! Who has cut off your nose and ear?" I then would say: "They were cut off in Your Cause, O Allah, and for the sake of Your Messenger "peace be upon him"." You then would say: "You have told the truth." Sa'd commented: "I saw him towards the end of the day, with his nose and ear hung in a thread." Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab said: "I hope that Allah should fulfill the last portion of his oath as He fulfilled the first portion of it." (At-Tabarani and Abu Na'im in his Hilyah).

Ath-Thawri and Bishr Al-Hafi used to say: "None but a doubtful (in faith) dislikes death, for the lover does not like to meet his beloved in whichever state he is."

Al-Buwaiti said to an ascetic: "Do you like death?" He seemed as if he stopped for a while, thereupon he said to him: "Had you been truthful, surely, you should have liked it." Then, he recited the statement of Allah Almighty: "then seek you for death, if you are sincere." (Al-Baqarah 94)

﴿ فَتَمَنَّوُاْ ٱلْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴾

The man said: "But the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "None of you should hope for death."" (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas). He said: "He said that none should hope for death because of harm that has befallen him, for to be pleased with the fate of Allah Almighty is better than to seek to flee from it."

You may argue: "Then, whoever does not like death: Is he imagined to be a lover of Allah Almighty?" In reply, let me say that the aversion for death might go back to the love for this world, and grief for leaving the family, property and offspring; And this contradicts the perfect love for Allah Almighty, for the perfect love is that which possesses the heart entirely. But it is not unlikely that one has, along with his love for his family, property and children, a little portion of love for Allah Almighty, for people indeed vary in love.

This disparity is attested from the narration in which Abu Hudhaifah Ibn Utbah Ibn Rabie'ah Ibn Abd-Shams "Allah be pleased with him" gave his sister Fatimah "Allah be pleased with her" in marriage to Salim "Allah be pleased with him" , his freed slave, thereupon the Quraish people blamed him for that and said: "You gave one of the noble ladies of Quraish to your freed slave!" on that he said: "By Allah, I gave her to him in marriage although I know well that he is better than her." His statement was more difficult on them than his behaviour. They asked him: "How given that she is your sister and he is your freed slave?" on that he said: "No doubt, I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing

and peace be upon him" saying: "Whoever likes to see a man who loves Allah from the depth of his heart (i.e. wholeheartedly), let him look at Salim."" (A similar narration is reported by Abu Na'im on the authority of Umar). This Hadith indicates to the fact that from among the people, there is such as loves Allah Almighty, but not from the depth of his heart, as he loves other things along with Him Almighty. However, his bliss with meeting Him on coming to Him (by death) is as much as is equal to his love for Him, and his pain by departure from this world by death is as much as is equal to his love for it.

The second cause of aversion for death is that the servant is still in the first commencements of the station of love and he does not dislike death itself in so much as he dislikes its being hastened on for him before he gets ready for meeting Allah Almighty. This does not attest the weak love. His example is like him whom the news of the arrival of his beloved has reached, thereupon he likes for his arrival to delay for some time in order to be able to prepare the house for him, and get himself ready for meeting him as he likes, wholeheartedly devoted to him. Aversion by that consideration does not contradict the perfection of love.

Its sign is to work for that relentlessly and engage in getting ready for it. Another sign is to give preference to what Allah loves over what he himself likes, outwardly and inwardly, thereupon he works hard and avoids following his inclinations, and continues to obey Allah Almighty regularly, come close to Him through the supererogatory deeds, and seek to attain with Him the highest degrees, just as the lover seeks more closeness to the heart of his beloved. Allah Almighty described the lovers as those who give others preference over themselves in His statement: " But those who, before them, had homes (in Medina) and had adopted the Faith, show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot). And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls; they are the ones that achieve prosperity." (Al-Hashr 9)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَٱلْإِيمَـٰنَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِى صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ أُوتُوا۟ وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

When love possesses the soul, it curbs inclination so much that the lover is not blessed with anything other than his beloved. His example is like that of Zulaikhah, the previous wife of Al-Aziz of Egypt: When she believed in Islam and got married to Yusuf "peace be upon him", she left him and devoted herself to the worship of Allah Almighty. Whenever he invited her to his bed by day, she would postpone him to the night, and whenever he invited her at night, she would postpone him to the day, and so on. She said to him: "O Yusuf! I loved you before I knew Him, and since I knew Him, my love for Him has left no place for anyone else in my heart to love, and I do not like to have a substitute for Him." He said to her: "Allah Almighty ordered me to have sexual relation with you, and told me that He would cause me to beget two children from you and make them Prophets." She said: "As Allah Almighty ordered you to do so, and made me a means to it, then, let it be in obedience of the

command of Allah Almighty." At that time, she found tranquility with him.

Whoever loves Allah does not disobey Him in the least. According to Sahl: "The sign of love for Allah is to give Him preference over yourself, and it is not that everyone acting upon the obedience of Allah becomes a beloved, but the real beloved is he who avoids what is forbidden." It is so as he said, for one's love for Allah Almighty is a cause of Allah's love for him, as He Almighty said: “whom He will love as they will love Him.” (Al-Ma’idah 54)

﴿ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ ﴾

When Allah loves a servant, He undertakes all of his affairs, and supports and helps him emerge victorious over his enemies, and his principal enemy is his own self and desires: Allah then never disappoints him, nor entrusts him to his desires and inclinations. This is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " But Allah has full knowledge of your enemies: Allah is enough for a Protector, and Allah is enough for a Helper." (An-Nisa' 45)

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَآئِكُمْ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ نَصِيرًا ﴾

You may argue: "Does disobedience contradict love in principle?" in reply, let me say that it contradicts its perfection, and not it in principle. How many a man who loves himself and he is sick, and likes to be healthy, even though he eats what harms him, although he knows that it is harmful to him. This does not mean that he does not like himself. But gnosis might weaken, and desire, in return, prevail, with which he fails to do what is due to his love.

This is attested from the narration in which An-Nu'aiman used to be brought to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" for sins he committed and required corporal punishment to be executed on him, until when he was brought to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" one day, and the corporal punishment prescribed for crimes was implemented on him, a man cursed him. On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "Curse him not for he loves Allah and His Messenger." (Al-Bukhari). Thus, his sins did not remove from him love in principle in as much as they removed the perfection of that love. According to a Gnostic: "If faith does not go beyond the surface of the heart, one loves Allah moderately, and when it goes beyond it and reaches the core of the heart, one loves Allah extremely, with which he leaves all sins."

In sum, the claim of love is very dangerous. For this reason, Al-Fudail said: "If you were asked whether you love Allah Almighty, keep silent, for if you answered in the negative, you would disbelieve, and if you answered in the affirmative, of a surety, you are not like the real lovers. So, beware of displeasure." According to a religious scholar: "There is in Paradise no bliss higher than the bliss of the real Gnostics and lovers; and there is in Hell no punishment more painful than that of the claimants of gnosis and love, which they have never realized."

Another sign is to persist in the celebration and remembrance of Allah Almighty, from which one's tongue never weakens nor his heart is void. Whoever loves a thing remembers it and remembers anything in connection with it more

often. The sign of love for Allah is to love to remember Him, love the Qur'an which is His speech, love His Messenger "peace be upon him" and love all that is attributed to Him Almighty, for whoever loves a man loves all that is related to him. If love becomes strong, its trace goes beyond the beloved himself to all that is surrounding him and related to him. This is not to join anything in love with him. Whoever loves the messenger of the beloved just for he is his messenger, and his speech just for it is his speech, his love for him does not exceed him to those things in so much as it signifies to the perfection of his love for him. Whoever, over whose heart the love for Allah prevails, loves all the creatures of Allah Almighty, just for they are His creation. How should he not love the Qur'an, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and the righteous servants of Allah Almighty?

For this reason, Allah Almighty said: " Say: "If you do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."" (Al Imran 31)

﴿ قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Love Allah for His favors He confers upon you, and love me for the love of Allah Almighty for me." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

According to Sufyan: "He who loves whomever Allah loves has indeed loved Allah; and he who honors whomever Allah honors has indeed honored Allah Almighty."

It is related from one of the beginners on the path to Allah that he said: "I detected in myself the sweetness of private talk with Allah, thereupon I was addicted to recitation of the Qur'an by day and night. Then, I intermitted for a while during which I stopped from recitation. Then, during my sleep I heard a caller calling me: "If you claim to love Me, then, why have you abandoned My Book? Have you considered my kind blame in it?" I then awoke with the love for the Qur'an being inculcated in my heart, thereupon I returned to my first state."

According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "None of you should ask about himself but the Holy Qur'an: If he likes the Holy Qur'an, then, he likes Allah Almighty, and if he does not like the Holy Qur'an, he then does not like Allah Almighty."

According to Sahl: "The sign of love for Allah Almighty is to love the Holy Qur'an, and the sign of love for the Qur'an is to love the Prophet "peace be upon him", and the sign of love for the Prophet "peace be upon him" is to love the sunnah, and the sign of love for sunnah is to love the hereafter, and the sign of love for the hereafter is to hate this world, and the sign of aversion for this world is not to take from it but a provision and a riding mount to convey him to the hereafter."

Another sign is to be affable with solitude, private talk with Allah Almighty, and recitation of His Holy Book. Thus, he performs Tahajjud prayer regularly, and seize the opportunity of quietness and pureness of night to be alone with Allah Almighty. Love at its least degree is to take pleasure in being with the beloved alone, and blessed in talking to him privately. Whoever has sleep and

engagement in talk with the people more pleasant to him than the private talk with Allah Almighty, then, how should his love for Allah be held valid?

It was said to Ibrahim Ibn Adham and he had descended from the mountain: "From where have you come?" he said: "From where I was in the company of Allah Almighty."

It is related that it was revealed to David "peace be upon him": "Do not be sociable with anyone of My creatures (on the exclusion of Me), for I cut two men from Me: A man who regarded My reward to have delayed to come to him, thereupon he abandoned Me; and a man who forgot Me and was satisfied with his state. The sign of that is that I entrust him to himself, and leave him confused in this world." As much as one is affable with anything else other than Allah Almighty, he feels estrangement from Allah Almighty, and far from His love.

It is related in the story of Barkh, the black slave with whom Moses "peace be upon him" invoked Allah for water, Allah Almighty said to Moses: "How excellent slave Barkh is in My sight, except that it has a defect." Moses "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! What is his defect?" he said: "The breeze of dawn appeals to Barkh, with which he finds tranquility; and whoever loves Me should not find tranquility with anything other than Me."

It is narrated that a worshipper kept worshipping Allah Almighty in a garden for a long time. One day, he looked at a bird singing in a nest he took in a tree, thereupon he said: "Would that I turn my place of worship to that tree, in order to get sociable with the voice of that bird!" He did accordingly, thereupon Allah Almighty revealed to the Prophet of his time: "Tell so and so, the worshipper, the following: 'You have become affable with a creature. I would degrade you in rank which you would never attain with your deed.'"

The sign of love then is to be perfectly affable with talking privately to the beloved, to be perfectly blessed with becoming in seclusion with him, and to be perfectly estranged from such as hinders that seclusion and interrupts the pleasure of private talk with him. The sign of intimacy is to have the mind engaged in the pleasure of private talk with one's beloved. Such pleasure led one of those, while being in prayer, not to sense the burning of his house. The leg of another one was cut off, as a medical treatment because of ailment that afflicted it, during his prayer, and he felt not. When love and intimacy with the beloved prevail over the soul, seclusion and private talk then become the comfort of the eye, therewith he averts all concerns and anxieties. Moreover, the love and intimacy engage his heart entirely to the extent to which he could not understand the affairs of this world unless they are repeated to his hearing again and again. That is because the lover rests assured only with his beloved.

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: For without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction" (Ar-Ra'd 28)

﴿ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴾

Qatadah said: "I.e. rejoice to Him and become affable with Him."

As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Whoever tastes the pleasure of

the pure love of Allah Almighty, it engages him from the pursuit of this world, and makes him feel estrangement from all its inhabitants."

According to Mutarrif Ibn Abu Bakr: "The lover never wearies from the talk of his beloved."

Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "False is he who claims he loves me if night comes upon him and he sleeps from Me. Does any lover like to meet his beloved? Here I am for such as wants Me."

According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: "Whoever loves Allah Almighty should necessarily hate himself." He said once again: "Whoever has not the following three characteristics, he then does not love Allah Almighty: to give preference to the speech of Allah Almighty over the speech of the people, the meeting with Allah Almighty over the meeting with the people, and the worship of Allah Almighty over the service of the people."

Another sign is not to grieve for what he misses other than Allah Almighty, and to grieve so much for any moment to elapse in which he does not remember and obey Allah Almighty. This requires him to pray for forgiveness, repent and ask for mercy of Allah so much once he finds himself heedless.

A Gnostic said: "Allah has many servants who loved Him so much and found reassurance and satisfaction with Him till they no longer grieved for anything that escaped them. They did not engage in their own fortunes, for their dominion was perfect: What was doomed to them reached them, and what escaped them did not aggrieve them, in reliance on His good manipulation of their affairs."

It is due upon the lover, once he returns from his heedlessness, to devote himself wholeheartedly to the beloved, and engage in blame, asking: "O Lord! By which sin have You cut off Your kindness from me, and deprived me of Your presence, and occupied me by myself and struggle of Satan?" , of a surety, this brings about purity and kindness in his heart, which expiates for his previous heedlessness and his slip becomes a means to renew his remembrance of Allah Almighty, and the purity of his heart. Once the lover sees none other than the beloved, and sees nothing coming but from him, he neither grieves nor complains, but rather receives all things with good pleasure and contentment, knowing that the beloved decrees for him only what is good for him, remembering His statement: " But it is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you." (Al-Baqarah 216)

﴿ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكۡرَهُواْ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُوَ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تُحِبُّواْ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُوَ شَرّٞ لَّكُمۡ ﴾

Another sign is to be blessed with obedience and acts of worship, of which one never wearies. In confirmation of that, one of them said: "I underwent with difficulty standing at night (for supererogatory prayer) for twenty years, and then enjoyed of it for further twenty years."

According to Al-Junaid: "The sign of a lover is to be regularly active and enthusiastically devote himself to worship with which his body might weary, but his heart never wearies."

According to another one: "The work in love for Allah Almighty never intermits." According to a religious scholar: "By Allah, no lover of Allah Almighty has ever quenched his thirst by His obedience even through the

greatest means possible to him."

All of this is observable in reality. The lover never gets tired of seeking to please his beloved, and take pleasure in his service with his heart, no matter how troublesome it might be on his body. Whenever his body becomes powerless, the dearest hope to him is to restore his health and power in order to be able to engage in service of his beloved. As such the love for Allah Almighty should be. If love prevails over the soul, it overpowers what is inferior to it. If one's beloved is dearer to him than laziness, of a surety, he leaves laziness and becomes active in his service; and if he is dearer to him than property, he leaves property in love for him; and so on.

It was said to a lover and he had consumed his own self and property (in love of Allah): "What has caused you to reach such a state of love?" he said: "One day, I heard a lover while being in seclusion with his beloved, saying to him: "I, by Allah, love you from the depth of my heart, whereas you turn back your face from me." The beloved said to him: "If you really love me, which thing are you ready to spend on me?" he said: "O master! I give you all that is in my possession, and then strive with my soul for you until I die." I said (to myself): "This is from a creature to a creature, and from a servant to a servant: then, how should it be if it is from servants to the worshipped?"

Another sign is to have pity and mercy for all the worshippers of Allah Almighty, and be strong and strict on the enemies of Allah Almighty, as well as on such as commits what is forbidden by Allah Almighty, as confirmed by Him in His statement: " and those who are with him are strong against Unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other." (Al-Fath 29)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ أَشِدَّآءُ عَلَى ٱلْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَآءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ﴾

It is also he who does not care about the blamer's blame, and nothing diverts him from being angry for the Sake of Allah Almighty. As such Allah Almighty described His allies when He said: "Such as are attached to Me in love in the same way as a child is attached to a particular thing in love of it, take shelter to celebration and remembrance of Me in the same way as an eagle takes shelter to its resting place, and grow angry for (violating) My sanctities in the same way as a tiger grows angry when it is provoked, careless whether people are more or less." Those are the signs of love. Whoever has these in perfection, his love for Allah then is perfect and sincere, and in the hereafter his drink would be pure, fresh and sweet. But he, whose love for Allah Almighty is mixed with the love for anything else, he would be blessed in the hereafter as much as is equal to his love for Allah, for his drink would be mixed with that of these nearest to Allah, as confirmed by the statement of Allah: " Truly the Righteous will be in Bliss... Their thirst will be slaked with Pure Wine sealed: The seal thereof will be musk: And for this let those aspire, who have aspirations: With it will be (given) a mixture of Tasnim: A spring, from (the waters) whereof drink those Nearest to Allah." (Al-Mutaffiffin 22, 25-28)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ تَعْرِفُ فِى وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٢٤﴾ يُسْقَوْنَ

مِن رَّحِيقٍ مَّخْتُومٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ خِتَٰمُهُۥ مِسْكٌ ۚ وَفِى ذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ ٱلْمُتَنَٰفِسُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَمِزَاجُهُۥ مِن تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

What then makes the drink of the righteous pure is its being mixed with the drink of those nearest to Allah. Drink here symbolizes the whole bliss of the Garden, just as the record indicates to all deeds, as confirmed by His statement: "Nay, verily the Record of the Righteous is (preserved) in Illiyyin. And what will explain to you what Illiyyin is? (There is) a Register (fully) inscribed, To which bear witness those Nearest (to Allah)." (Al-Mutaffiffin 18-21)

﴿ كَلَّآ إِنَّ كِتَٰبَ ٱلْأَبْرَارِ لَفِى عِلِّيِّينَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا عِلِّيُّونَ ﴿١٩﴾ كِتَٰبٌ مَّرْقُومٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ يَشْهَدُهُ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾

What then makes high the record of the righteous is that these nearest to Allah bear witness to it. As well as the righteous find more and more in their state and gnosis by their closeness to and seeing those nearest to Allah Almighty, as such their state would be in the hereafter as confirmed by His statement: "And your creation or your resurrection is in no wise but as an individual soul: For Allah is He Who hears and sees (all things)." (Luqman 28)

﴿ مَّا خَلْقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

And: "even as We produced the first Creation, so shall We produce a new one: a promise We have undertaken: truly shall We fulfill it." (Al-Anbiya 104)

﴿ كَمَا بَدَأْنَآ أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُّعِيدُهُۥ ۚ وَعْدًا عَلَيْنَآ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾

And: "A fitting recompense (for them)." (An-Naba 26)

﴿ جَزَآءً وِفَاقًا ﴿٢٦﴾ ﴾

I.e. a reward to fit their deed: Pure drink for pure love, and mixed drink for mixed love, and so on. He Almighty said: " Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it." (Az-Zalzalah 7-8)

﴿ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

And: " Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)." (Ar-Ra'd 11)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا۟ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

And: "Allah is never unjust in the least degree: if there is any good (done) He doubles it, and gives from His own presence a great reward." (An-Nisa' 40)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

And: "We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. And if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account." (Al-Anbiya 47)

﴿ وَنَضَعُ ٱلْمَوَٰزِينَ ٱلْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَٰسِبِينَ ﴾

Whoever has his love in this world in the hope of Paradise and what it contains of bliss, houris, and palaces, he would be made to abide in Paradise, and enjoy thereof whatever he likes, play with children and bless himself with women; and this is the utmost degree of his pleasure in the hereafter, for every one is given in love only what he desires for. Whoever has his purpose is the Lord of the abode and the Sovereign of the dominion and the King of the kingdom, Whose love prevails over his heart with sincerity and truthfulness, of a surety he would be " In an Assembly of Truth, in the Presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent." (Al-Qamar 55)

﴿ فِي مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِندَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ﴾

The righteous would enjoy themselves in the gardens and bless themselves with the houris and children, while these nearest to Allah Almighty would abide by the Presence of Allah to which they restrict their vision, and regard with slightness all pleasures of Paradise in comparison with the Presence of Allah Almighty. The former party would be engaged in fulfilling the desires of their abdomen and genitals, and the latter party would be engaged in sitting in the presence of Allah.

Another sign is to be in his love fearful and frightened by veneration and exaltation, thinking fear to contradict love, although it is not so. Perception of greatness and grandeur enjoins veneration and exaltation, whereas perception of beauty enjoins love. But lovers in particular have fears in the stations of love which are unique to them, some of which are more severe than others. The first is to feel afraid of turning away, and more severe is to feel afraid of veiling, and more severe is to feel afraid of remoteness. It is that significance which frightened the master of all lovers "peace be upon him" when he heard the statement of Allah Almighty in the Surah of Hud: " Ah! Behold! removed (from sight) were 'Ad, the People of Hud!" (Hud 60)

﴿ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّعَادٍ قَوْمِ هُودٍ ﴾

And: "ah! behold! removed (from sight) were the Thamud!" (Hud 68)

﴿ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّثَمُودَ ﴾

And: " Ah! Behold! How the Madyan were removed (from sight) as were removed the Thamud!" (Hud 95)

﴿ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّمَدْيَنَ كَمَا بَعِدَتْ ثَمُودُ ﴾

The veneration and fear of remoteness is aggravated in the heart of such as tasted the pleasure of closeness. The degrees of closeness are unlimited, and it is due upon the servant to strive his utmost in order to increase in closeness as much as he could. That is the significance of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when eh said: "He who has two days equal (in deed and reward) is a loser, and he who has his day worse than his yesterday is cursed." (This is narrated by Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Abd Al-Aziz Ibn

Abu Rawad, who said that he saw the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in a dream and asked him and he gave him this answer).

It is further reported that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "(Sometimes) shades heap up on my heart every day and night to the extent that I ask Allah for forgiveness seventy times." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Al-Agharr).

It is reported that Allah Almighty says: "The minimum punishment I inflict upon the religious scholar, if he gives preference to the worldly desires over the acts of worship, is to deprive him of the pleasure of private talk with Me." The laymen are deprived of more as a punishment because of desires, whereas the private are deprived of more because of only their claim, conceit and reliance on the apparent commencements of kindness. That is the hidden plan which none is able to avoid but him who is well-established in knowledge.

Furthermore, there is the fear of missing what has become unattainable after missing it. There is also the fear of abandonment. The lover persists in love and longing, and pursuit of more and more, and he does not abandon his beloved except with a new kindness, which might be a cause of his pause or even retraction. Abandonment afflicts him from wherever he feels not just as love strikes him from where he feels not. Those turning states have concealed heavenly causes which it is beyond the capacity of mankind to know. If Allah Almighty likes to do a plan against him, He conceals from him the would-be abandonment, thereupon he remains in his hope and is deceived by the good vision, prevailing heedlessness, inclination, or forgetfulness. All of those are among the soldiers of Satan that counteract oppose the soldiers of angels such as knowledge, mind, and remembrance of Allah. As well as there are, of Allah's attributes what stimulates love in the heart, such as kindness, mercy, and wisdom, there are other attributes which arouse abandonment such as compelling, exaltation in might and power, and freedom of want. Those are the commencements of plan, wretchedness and deprivation.

There is also a fear of replacement, i.e. that the heart should move from his love to the love of another. That is the aversion, whose commencements is abandonment; and turning away and veiling are commencements of abandonment; and breast constriction to do good and withdrawal of persistence in remembrance of Allah Almighty, and tiresomeness of the daily devotional recitals are causes and commencements of all of those.

The appearance of those causes indicates to the turning of the station of love into the station of aversion, we seek refuge with Allah from that. Persistence in fear of those matters and caution of them by permanent vigilance indicate to the truthfulness of love. Whoever loves a thing should necessarily feel afraid he might lose it; and this is why the lover remains in fear particularly if the beloved could be lost.

According to a Gnostic: "Whoever worships Allah Almighty by way of love without fear, he would be destroyed because of indulgence and pampering; and whoever worships Him by way of fear without love, he would be cut off from Him because of remoteness and estrangement; and whoever worships Him by

way of both love and fear, Allah Almighty loves him, brings him close to His presence, and enables and instructs him." The lover then should necessarily entertain fear, and the fearful should necessarily entertain love. But whoever has love possess his heart with only a little portion remaining thereof for fear, he is said to be in the station of love, and regarded among the lovers. If love alone is to prevail entirely, it would be beyond the power of humankind to tolerate. Fear counterbalances it and alleviates its trace on the heart.

It is related that one of the Abdal asked a sincere affirmer and lover of truth to ask Allah Almighty to bestow upon him only an atom of His gnosis. He did accordingly and Allah Almighty responded to him, thereupon the man wandered in mountains and his mind was confounded, and he remained for seven days unable to benefit from anything or be of any avail to anything at all. The sincere affirmer of truth asked Allah Almighty to reduce the atom of gnosis He had given to him, thereupon Allah Almighty revealed to him: "We have given him only a part of one hundred thousand of an atom of gnosis. Indeed, one hundred thousand servants asked Me to bestow upon them a portion of love at the same time this man has asked Me, and I postponed their answer until you interceded for this, and when I responded to your question, I also gave them the same as I gave him. Thus, I divided an atom of gnosis into one hundred thousand portions between them. What he is suffering is the trace of that." He said: "Exalted be You, the Wisest of all wise! Reduce from what You have given him." Allah then took away from him most of that portion, and there remained with him only a portion of ten thousand portions of an atom of gnosis. Thus, his love, fear and hope were counterbalanced, and he became quiet like the other Gnostics.

It is impossible for the people to share in such kinds of gnosis, and it is forbidden for anyone to disclose what is revealed to him thereof. Were all the people to share in it, the whole world would be destroyed. Wisdom of Allah requires that most of them should be heedless of it in order for the world to be well constructed. Were all the people to eat only the unlawful for forty days, surely, the whole world would be ruined, for they all would abstain in it, all markets would become idle. Moreover, if all the religious scholars and learned among the people to eat only the unlawful, they would engage in themselves, and tongues and pens would stop from writing knowledge. But there are mysteries and wisdoms in evil as well as there are mysteries and wisdoms in good; and His wisdom is infinite as well as His power is unlimited.

Another sign is to conceal love and avoid claim of it, and beware of disclosing affection and longing in exaltation and veneration of the beloved, and jealousy on his secret. Love indeed is one of the secrets of the beloved. Moreover, in the claim, one might exceed the due limits of the meaning to the point of defamation, for which there is a severe punishment, and disaster because of which might be hastened on in this world. It is true that the lover might come under intoxication of love, which befogs his mind and causes trouble to him, with the result that his love might appear on him. If this occurs to him unintentionally, he should be excused, for he is oppressed by the influence of love. In other cases, the fire of love might kindle so much that one

would not be able to tolerate its authority, and the heart might overflow with it ceaselessly.

One of the Gnostics said: "The more one refers to Allah Almighty, the farther he is from Him." Of a surety, he means such of people as remembers Him ostentatiously every moment and in the presence of anyone: this is hateful in the sight of lovers and Gnostics.

One day, Dhun-Nun Al-Misri visited one of his brothers who claimed love (for Allah Almighty), and found him suffering from a distress, thereupon he said to him: "He loves Him not who senses the pain of His harm." The man said: "But as for me, I say that he loves him not who is not blessed with the pain of His harm." Dhun-Nun said: "But I say that he loves him not who makes himself famous for His love." On that the man said: "I ask for forgiveness of Allah, and turn to him in repentance."

You may argue: "Since love is the highest station, to disclose it is to disclose good, then, why should it be disapproved?" In reply to that, it should be known to you that love is praiseworthy, and disclosing it also is praiseworthy. But what is blameworthy is to pretend it ostentatiously, for this develops claim and arrogance; and it is due upon the lover to have his states and deeds not his statements and words reveal his love. Were his love or act indicative of love to appear necessarily, he should do it without intention, for the lover's intention is to reveal his love only to the beloved. But to disclose the love to anyone else is to join him in that love, and this affects love. To disclose the love through deed and word then is blameworthy unless one is under the intoxication of love, with which the tongue speaks freely and organs and parts of body are shaken with trouble, in which case, one should not be held responsible.

What is hateful here is to pretend to love, for when the Gnostic knows about the states of the angels in their permanent love and inherent longing with which they glorify and exalt Allah Almighty relentlessly day and night, and that they neither weary nor disobey any command given to them by Allah Almighty, and always do what they are commanded to do, he despises his state, and disdains to disclose his love, for he comes to know that from among the lovers for Allah in the dominion of the Lord Almighty, he is the most despicable, and his love the shortest of all who love Allah.

In this respect, it is related from one who was revealed that he said: "I kept worshipping Allah Almighty for thirty years with the works of hearts and organs and parts of body, striving my utmost power, until I thought I have done a thing of significance to Allah Almighty." Then, he made a mention of things and signs of the heavens and the earth that were revealed to him by Allah Almighty in a long story at the end of which he said: "Then, I saw a row of angels as much as is equal to the number of all what Allah has created. I asked them: "Who are you?" they said: "We are the lovers for Allah Almighty, Whom we have been worshipping for three hundred thousand years, during which nothing else has ever occurred to our minds, nor have we remembered any other than Him." I then felt shy of (the insignificance of) my deeds (in comparison with theirs), and granted them to such of people as on whom punishment is due perchance his

torment would be alleviated in the Hell."

Then, whoever knows himself would necessarily know his Lord Almighty, of Whom he would feel shy, and disdain to claim any love ostentatiously. It is true that his movements and silence, daring and abstention, hesitation and reluctance, might bear witness to his love. In this respect, it is related by Al-Junaid that he said: "Our mister As-Sari fell ill and we knew no reason for his ailment. An experienced physician was described for us and we brought him. He took hold of a bottle full of his urine and checked it and then said: "This is the urine of a lover (for Allah)." I swooned and fell unconscious and the bottle of urine fell from my hand. When I recovered and returned to As-Sari and told him, he smiled and said: "May Allah fight him! How insightful he is!" I asked: "O mister! Is (the trace of) love shown in urine?" he answered in the affirmative."

As-Sari said once again: "If I like to say, nothing made my skin stick to my bone, and made lean my body other than my love for Him." Then, he felt unconscious. Those are some of the signs and fruits of love.

Among those signs is the intimacy and contentment as will be shown later.

In sum, all good things of religion and noble manners are among the fruits of love. What love does not produce is the following of inclinations and fancies, and it is among the evil manners. It is true that one might love Allah Almighty for His doing good to him, and one might love Him for His glory and beauty, even though He does not do good to him. All lovers are but one of both divisions. For this reason, Al-Junaid said: "People in their love for Allah Almighty are divided into laymen and private. The laymen acquired that love by their knowledge of Him in His continuous doing of good and bestowal of favors, thereupon they could not help please him, but their love varies in littleness and muchness in accordance with the favors and doing of good. As for the private, they acquired love by their perception of the grandeur of His will, power, knowledge, wisdom, and uniqueness of dominion and kingdom. When they knew His perfect attributes and complete beautiful names, they could not help love Him, for He deserved love in their sight for He is worthy of it, even though were He to take away from them all the favors."

It is true that from among the people, there is such as loves his own inclinations and Iblis, the enemy of Allah Almighty. But even, he is dissembled by means of arrogance and ignorance, thinking that he is a lover of Allah Almighty, and this is he who lacks those signs; or by way of showing off, in order to be seen and heard of men, and his purpose is only the transitory things of this world, although what seems from his outwardly contradicts what he conceals inwardly, and those are the evil religious scholars and reciters: Those are hateful to Allah Almighty on earth.

CHAPTER TWELVE
EXPOSITION OF MEANING OF INTIMACY WITH ALLAH

We have already mentioned that intimacy, fear and longing are among the fruits and traces of love. But those traces differ in relation with the lover according to his vision and what prevails over him in a particular time or state. If

it prevails over himself to look forward from behind the partition of the unseen to the utmost degree of beauty, feeling he is too short to fathom glory, the heart would be immediately moved and provoked to pursue that. This state is called longing, and it pertains to what is absent. If it prevails over him to rejoice of his closeness and vision of what is presently revealed to him, and his vision is restricted only to see the present revealed beauty, giving no care to what he has not attained yet, the heart then would cheer up with what it perceives, and this state of cheerfulness is called intimacy. If he is interested with the attribute of exaltation in might and power and freedom of want, carelessness and risk of removal and remoteness, the heart would feel pain, and this state of pain is called fear.

Those states follow observations, and observations are required by unlimited reasons and means. Intimacy, for example, is that the heart rejoices of the vision of beauty, to the extent that if it prevails in it over the observation of what is absent from it, and the risk of vanishing and disappearance, its pleasure and bliss would grow strong. This is the significance of the reply of one when he was asked: "Do you have longing?" he said: "No, because longing should be for what is absent." If the absent is present, then for which would he have longing? He, over whom the state of intimacy prevails, finds his pleasure only in seclusion and solitude.

It was said to Ibrahim Ibn Adham when he had descended from the mountain: "From where have you come?" He said: "From where I was in the company of Allah Almighty." That is because intimacy with Allah requires one to feel estranged from anything else other than Allah Almighty. Moreover, all that hinders that seclusion becomes the heaviest on the heart. In this respect, it is narrated that whenever Moses "peace be upon him" was communicated directly by his Lord, he would spend a long time during which he never heard the speech of anyone of the people but that he would be afflicted with nausea. That is because love requires the sweetness of the speech and remembrance of the beloved, which drives away from the heart any other sweetness.

For this reason, a wise man said in his supplication: "O Lord, Who made me affable with His remembrance, and estranged from His creatures." Allah Almighty said to David "peace be upon him": "Have longing for Me and be affable with Me, and estranged from anything else."

It was said to Rabi'ah: "By which thing have you attained that rank?" she said: "By leaving what concerns me not, and engagement and intimacy with Him Who is never-ending."

Abd-Al-Wahid said: "I came upon a monk to whom I said: "O monk! Has solitude appealed to you?" he said: "O man! Were you to taste the sweetness of solitude, you would feel estranged from everything else. Solitude is the leading act of worship." I asked him once again: "O monk! What is the least thing you find in solitude?" He said: "To be relieved of adulating the people and safety from their evil." I further asked: "O monk! When would the servant taste the sweetness of intimacy with Allah Almighty?" he said: "When affection becomes pure, and treatment sincere (to Him Alone)." I said: "Then, when would affection become

pure?" he said: "When all concerns turn into one concern in obedience (to Allah Almighty).""

According to a wise man: "Wonder at the creatures, how they seek a substitute for You! Wonder at the hearts, how they get affable with anything else other than You!"

You may argue: "Then, what is the sign of intimacy with Allah Almighty?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that its distinctive sign is to have one's breast constricted by mixing with the people, and annoyed by them, and, in return, enjoy of the sweetness of remembrance of Allah. Were he to be in a gathering, he is in solitude while being in assembly, and in assembly (with Allah Almighty) while being in solitude, a sojourner in residence, and a resident in journey, an attendant in absence and an absent in attendance, mixing the people only with his body, while he is in solitude with his heart, wholeheartedly involved in the sweetness of remembrance. That is the meaning of intimacy with Allah, and those are its indications and signs.

Some scholastic theologians went as far as to deny longing, intimacy and love for Allah Almighty, thinking that this gives false impression of likening (Allah to His creatures), and of course, this is not so, since it indicates to their ignorance of the fact that the beauty of perceiving what is invisible with insights excels in perfection the beauty of perceiving visibles with sights, and the gnosis of the invisibles is more pleasant to the masters of hearts. Among those scholastic theologians, a mention may be made of Ahmad Ibn Ghalib who denied the talk of love, longing and intimacy of Al-Junaid and his companions, and denied also the station of contentment, saying: "Nothing is possible but patience. As for contentment, it is unimaginable." But even, this speech is defective and imperfect, of a narrow-minded man who did not know of stations of religion but its external husks. All of what is visible in religion belongs to the external husks, whereas what is invisible to the internal core of religion. Whoever does not know from the nut but its external crust thinks, though falsely, that it has no oil at all; and he is excusable, although by no means would his excuse be accepted.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

EXPOSITION OF MEANING OF ELATION AND PAMPERING PRODUCED BY OVERWHELMING INTIMACY

It should be known to you that if intimacy is permanent, strong and prevailing, and neither the pain of longing nor the fear of change embitters it, it indeed produces a kind of elation in deeds and words, and private talk with Allah Almighty. It might seem disapproving due to what it has of audacity and lack of veneration, but at the same time, it might be tolerable from him who is in the station of intimacy, and whoever is not in that station, and rather imitates them in word and deed, would be destroyed by it, and become on the threshold of disbelief.

The typical example of it is the private talk of Barkh the Black with whom Allah Almighty commanded Moses "peace be upon him" to invoke Him for rain after the children of Israel had suffered from famine for seven years, thereupon Moses "peace be upon him" set out in the company of seventy

thousand of his people to invoke Allah Almighty for rain. Allah Almighty revealed to him: "How should I respond to their invocation and their sins had overwhelmed them, and their innermost secrets were malicious? They invoke Me with no certainty nor fear of My plan. Return to one of My servants called Barkh and tell him to set out with you perchance I would respond to his invocation." Moses "peace be upon him" inquired about him, and failed to find him. One day, while Moses "peace be upon him" was on the way, a black slave received him, and there was dust in between his eyes because of the trace of prostration, and he had wrapped himself in a wrapper whose ends he had tied on his neck. Moses "peace be upon him" was led by his gnosis by virtue of the light of Allah Almighty, to salute him. He asked him about his name and the slave said: "Barkh." Moses said: "You have been sought by us. Come out to invoke Allah for rain for us."

He came out and invoked for rain and said during his invocation: "This is not fitting for Your deeds, nor for Your forbearance, nor for what seems to You. Do you suffer from shortage of springs or the winds proves disobedient of Your command or what you have was consumed, or you grew angry with the sinners? Had you not been forgiver of sins before You created the doers of mistakes? You created mercy and enjoined sympathy and kindness. Do You like to show us that You withhold from us? Or do you fear not to hasten on punishment?" He did not leave before the children of Israel were provided with rainfall in abundance, and Allah Almighty caused greenery to grow in half a day. When Barkh returned and Moses "peace be upon him" received him, he said: "Have you not seen that when I pleaded Him He immediately was just and fair to me?" When Moses "peace be upon him" intended to attack him, Allah Almighty revealed to him: "Barkh indeed makes Me laugh thrice a day."

It is further narrated on the authority of Al-Hassan that he said: "Many huts were burnt in Basrah, and one in the middle was not burnt; and at that time Abu Musa "Allah be pleased with him" was the governor of Basrah. When he was informed about that, he sent for the owner of the hut and he was brought to him. He was an old man, to whom he said: "O old man! What is the matter with you that your hut was not burnt?" He said: "I took oath that my Lord Almighty should not burn it." On that Abu Musa "Allah be pleased with him" said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" having said: "There would be in my people men of disheveled hair and untidy clothes, and if they take oath that Allah should do a thing, He Almighty would fulfill their oath." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is further narrated that a burning broke up in Basrah and Abu Ubaidah Al-Khawas came and started to step over the fire, and the Basrah governor said to him: "Beware lest fire would burn you." He said: "I took oath that my Lord Almighty should not burn me with the fire." He said to him: "Then, swear that fire should be extinguished (by permission of Allah Almighty)." He swore that fire should be put out (by permission of Allah Almighty) , and it was put out.

It is related that one day Abu Hafs was walking when a confounded rural man received him and he asked him: "What is wrong with you?" he said: "I have lost my donkey and I have none other than it." Abu Hafs stopped and said: "By Your Honor, I would not take a step unless You restore to him his donkey." Then, the

donkey appeared immediately, and Abu Hafs left.

Those and others like them occur to those of intimacy with Allah Almighty, and it is not fitting for anyone else to imitate them in that.

According to Al-Junaid: "The men of intimacy say during their speech and private talks in their solitude and seclusion things that seem disbelief in the sight of the laymen…and were the laymen to hear them, surely, they would render them disbelievers." This is tolerable from and fitting for them but not for others. It is not unlikely that He Almighty is pleased with such a servant because of a thing for which He grows angry with another, so long as their stations are different. In the Qur'an there are alerts to those concepts if you make sense to them. All Qur'anic stories are but alerts to those endued with insights and understanding perchance they would consider them with reflection and meditation.

The first narration pertains to the story of Adam "peace be upon him" and Iblis: Do you not see how both shared in sin and transgression, and then differed in selection and infallibility? As for Iblis, he was removed far from His mercy. As for Adam "peace be upon him" He Almighty said about him: " Thus did Adam disobey his Lord, and allow himself to be seduced. But his Lord chose him (for His Grace): He turned to him (in repentance), and gave him guidance." (Ta Ha 121-122)

﴿ وَعَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ رَبَّهُۥ فَغَوَىٰ ﴿١٢١﴾ ثُمَّ ٱجْتَبَٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾

Furthermore, in another narration, Allah Almighty blamed His Prophet "peace be upon him" for his turning away from a servant, and turning his face to another servant, given that both were equal in servitude and different in state. He Almighty said making a comparison between both: "As to one who regards himself as self-sufficient, To him do you attend; Though it is no blame on you if he grow not (in spiritual understanding). But as to him who came to you striving earnestly, And with fear (in his heart), Of him was you unmindful." (Abasa 5-10)

﴿ أَمَّا مَنِ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ فَأَنتَ لَهُۥ تَصَدَّىٰ ﴿٦﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكَّىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَن جَآءَكَ يَسْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَهُوَ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٩﴾ فَأَنتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

On another occasion, Allah Almighty commanded him "peace be upon him" to sit with a group of people saying: "When those come to you who believe in Our Signs, say: "Peace be on you; your Lord has inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy: verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended (his conduct), lo! He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Al-An'am 54)

﴿ وَإِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ ٱلرَّحْمَةَ ۖ أَنَّهُۥ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنكُمْ سُوٓءًۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُۥ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

Then, He ordered him not to sit with another group of disbelievers saying: " When you see men engaged in vain discourse about Our Signs, turn away from them unless they turn to a different theme. If Satan ever makes you forget, then after recollection, sit not you in the company of those who do wrong." (Al-An'am 68)

﴿ وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرَىٰ مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

In confirmation of that, He said to him once again: " And keep your soul content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face; and let not your eyes pass beyond them, seeking the pomp and glitter of this Life; nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds." (Al-Kahf 28)

﴿ وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۖ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

Similarly, elation and pampering are tolerable from some servants and not form others. For example, Moses "peace be upon him" said out of elation of his intimacy: " This is no more than Your trial: By it You cause whom You will to stray, and You lead whom You will into the right path. You are our Protector: So forgive us and give us Your mercy; for You are the Best of those who forgive." (Al-A'raf 155)

﴿ إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَهْدِي مَن تَشَاءُ ۖ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا ۖ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ ﴾

A mention also may be made of his statement in reply to the Lord when He said to him: "Go you to Pharaoh, for he has indeed transgressed all bounds" (Ta Ha 24)

﴿ اذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

"O my Lord! I do fear that they will charge me with falsehood: My breast will be straitened. And my speech may not go (smoothly): so send unto Aaron. And (further), they have a charge of crime against me; and I fear they may slay me." (Ash-Shu'ara 12-14)

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿١٢﴾ وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِي وَلَا يَنطَلِقُ لِسَانِي فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَارُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَلَهُمْ عَلَيَّ ذَنبٌ فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

He further said: "Our Lord! we fear lest he hasten with insolence against us, or lest he transgress all bounds." (Ta Ha 45)

﴿ قَالَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ أَن يَفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَا أَوْ أَن يَطْغَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾ ﴾

If this is from anyone other than Moses "peace be upon him" it would be impolite, for the one who is made to stand in the station of intimacy, should be dealt with gently and the like of this might be tolerable from him. What is less than this was not tolerable from Jonah "peace be upon him" when he was made to stand in the station of fear and veneration. He was put to punishment of prison in the belly of the fish for three days, in three darknesses, and " Had not Grace from His Lord reached him, he would indeed have been cast off on the

naked shore, in disgrace." (Al-Qalam 49)

﴿ لَّوْلَآ أَن تَدَٰرَكَهُۥ نِعْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ لَنُبِذَ بِٱلْعَرَآءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾

Our Prophet "peace be upon him" was forbidden to imitate him and Allah Almighty said to him: " So wait with patience for the Command of your Lord, and be not like the Companion of the Fish, when he cried out in agony." (Al-Qalam 48)

﴿ فَٱصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُن كَصَاحِبِ ٱلْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾

Those differences go back in part to the difference of states and stations, and in part to the preordained superiority given by Allah to some over others. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " We did bestow on some Prophets more (and other) gifts than on others." (Al-Isra' 55)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾

And: "Those Messengers We endowed with gifts, some above others: to one of them Allah spoke; others He raised to degrees (of honour)." (Al-Baqarah 253)

﴿ ۞ تِلْكَ ٱلرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ مِّنْهُم مَّن كَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَٰتٍ ﴿٢٥٣﴾ ﴾

Jesus "peace be upon him" was among those given superiority, and due to his being pampered, he greeted himself saying: "So Peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)!" (Maryam 33)

﴿ وَٱلسَّلَٰمُ عَلَىَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدتُّ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

This from him was out of elation for what he contemplated while being in the station of intimacy.

As for John, son of Zechariah "peace be upon him", he was made to stand in the position of fear and shyness, and thus he did not speak until his Lord Almighty praised him saying: " So Peace on him the day he was born, the day that he dies, and the day that he will be raised up to life (again)!" (Maryam 15)

﴿ وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

Consider also how He Almighty tolerated from the brothers of Yusuf "peace be upon him". According to a religious scholar: I have counted about forty two sins committed by them, some more severe and mortal than others, beginning from their statement as related by Allah Almighty: "Truly Joseph and his brother are loved more by our father than we: but we are a goodly body! really our father is obviously wandering (in his mind)! (Yusuf 8)

﴿ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لَيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِينَا مِنَّا وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

But He Almighty excused them, and forgave for them, unlike the case of Uzair in which He did not tolerate from him only one question he asked about the Divine decree, and he was said to have been omitted from the register of Prophets. Similarly, Bal'am Ibn Ba'ura' was from among the leading learned religious scholars and when he devoured this world for the religion, this was not tolerable from him.

Asif was among the transgressors against himself, and his sins were corporal, and Allah Almighty forgave him. In this respect, it is reported that Allah Almighty revealed to Solomon "peace be upon him": "O chief of worshippers, and the son of the main ascetic! To which time would your maternal cousin Asif continue to disobey Me and I forbear him? By My Honor, if I seize him, I would make him a lesson to be considered by those to come after him." When Asif entered upon Solomon "peace be upon him" he told him of what had been revealed to him by Allah Almighty. He came out until he ascended a sandhill and raised his head and hands towards the sky and said: "O my God and Master! You are what You are, and I am what I am. How should I repent unless You accept my repentance, and how should I become infallible? Unless you protect me, surely, I would return to sin." Allah Almighty then revealed to him: "You have told the truth O Asif! You are only what you are, and I am what I am. I accept repentance, and I have turned to you in repentance; and I am Oft-Turning, Most Merciful."

That is the established way of Allah Almighty in His creatures: He gives some superiority and priority over others. Those stories are mentioned in the Qur'an in order to know the eternal established way of Allah in His servants who passed away. The Qur'an has nothing but that it is a light and guidance, in which Allah Almighty shows Himself to His creatures: sometimes by exaltation like His statement: " Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begets not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him." (Al-Ikhlas 1-4)

﴿ قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌۢ ۝ ﴾

And sometimes by the attributes of His Glory like His statement: " Allah is He, than Whom there is no other god; the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme: Glory to Allah! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms (or Colours). To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names: whatever is in the heavens and on earth, does declare His Praises and Glory; and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (Al-Hashr 23-24)

﴿ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْقُدُّوسُ ٱلسَّلَٰمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ ٱلْمُهَيْمِنُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْجَبَّارُ ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ۝ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخَٰلِقُ ٱلْبَارِئُ ٱلْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ۝ ﴾

And sometimes by showing to them His threatening and hopeful acts and reciting to them His established way in His enemies and allies like His statement: "" See you not how your Lord dealt with the 'Ad (people) Of the (city of) Iram, with lofty pillars, The like of which were not produced in (all) the land?" (Al-Fajr 6-8)

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ۝ إِرَمَ ذَاتِ ٱلْعِمَادِ ۝ ٱلَّتِى لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِى ٱلْبِلَٰدِ ۝ ﴾

And: " See you not how your Lord dealt with the Companions of the Elephant? Did He not make their treacherous plan go astray? And He sent

against them flights of Birds, Striking them with stones of baked clay. Then did He make them like an empty field of stalks and straw, (of which the corn) has been eaten up." (Al-Fil 1-5)

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْفِيلِ ﴿١﴾ أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِى تَضْلِيلٍ ﴿٢﴾ وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ﴿٣﴾ تَرْمِيهِم بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٤﴾ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ﴿٥﴾ ﴾

part two: contentment

Explication of contentment with the fate of Allah Almighty: Its meaning and real nature, and what is narrated about its excellence

It should be known to you that contentment is among the fruits of love, and one of the highest stations of the nearest to Allah Almighty. But at the same time, its meaning and real nature are abstruse on the majority of people, and none perceives it but those endued with the talent of interpretation and religious understanding. Indeed, some denied contentment with what opposes inclination, under pretext that were one to be contented with all things as being acts of Allah Almighty, this requires that he should necessarily be contented with disbelief and sins. By this illusion, some were deceived, and claimed that contentment with disobedience and wickedness, and leaving objection and disapproval is to admit the fate of Allah Almighty. Were those mysteries to be disclosed to such as restricts his vision only to the hearsay of the apparent matters of Sharia, surely, the Prophet "peace be upon him" would not have invoked for Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" saying: "O Allah! Endow him with the faculty of religious comprehension and teach him the (talent of) interpretation." (Al-Bukhari).

Let us then begin with discussing the following:

Explication of excellence of contentment

Relating the tales of the contented

Explication of real nature of notion of contentment with what opposes inclination, and what is thought to belong to contentment and it is not of it, like leaving invocation and silence from sins and disobedience.

CHAPTER ONE

EXPLICATION OF VIRTUE OF CONTENTMENT

From the Holy Quran, a mention may be made of the statement of Allah Almighty: " Allah well-pleased with them, and they with Allah: that is the great salvation, (The fulfillment of all desires)." (Al-Ma'idah 119)

﴿ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾ ﴾

In confirmation of that, He Almighty said: "Is there any Reward for Good other than Good?" (Ar-Rahman 60)

﴿ هَلْ جَزَآءُ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ إِلَّا ٱلْإِحْسَٰنُ ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴾

The utmost degree of good is the Allah's good pleasure with His servant,

which is the fruit of the servant's contentment with his Lord Almighty.

He Almighty further said: "Allah has promised to Believers - men and women - Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of everlasting bliss. But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah: that is the supreme felicity." (At-Tawbah 72)

﴿ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ (٧٢) ﴾

Here, Allah Almighty made the good pleasure superior to the Gardens of Eden, just as He raised His remembrance over prayer in His statement: " establish regular Prayer: for Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; and remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt. And Allah knows the (deeds) that you do." (Al-Ankabut 45)

﴿ ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ (٤٥) ﴾

As well as the contemplation of the remembered in prayer is greater than the prayer itself, of a surety, the good pleasure of the Lord of Paradise is greater than Paradise itself, for it is the utmost finale of the inhabitants of Paradise.

It is narrated in a particular Hadith that the Prophet "peace be upon him" told that Allah Almighty rises (with His Glory) to the faithful believers and says to them: "Ask Me for whatever you like." They say: "We ask for Your good pleasure." (Al-Bazzar and At-Tabarani on the authority of Anas). Their request for good pleasure after vision is the greatest preference.

As for the servant's contentment, we are going to explain its real nature. Concerning the good pleasure of Allah with the servant, it is different, though close in meaning to His love for him. But it is impermissible to be uncovered here, for the people's understanding falls short of perceiving it, and anyone of them has the power to perceive it keeps it within himself.

In sum, there is no rank superior to the vision of Him Almighty, and those who ask Him for His good pleasure, would do so in order to ensure their permanent vision of Him Almighty. The bliss of vision then is the highest finale and the greatest ambition, and when they are commanded to ask for more, they would not ask but to ensure the permanent vision of Him, for they know that the good pleasure is the cause of permanent removal of the veil.

Allah Almighty said too: " There will be for them therein all that they wish, and more besides in Our Presence." (Qaf 35)

﴿ لَهُم مَّا يَشَآءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ (٣٥) ﴾

According to a commentator: "At the time of this more besides, the inhabitants of Paradise would receive three wonderful things from the Lord of the worlds: the first is a gift from Allah Almighty, the like of which they do not have in the Garden, as confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: " Now no person knows what delights of the eye are kept hidden (in reserve) for them, as a reward for their (good) Deeds." (As-Sajdah 17)

﴿ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِىَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

The second is their being saluted with peace by their Lord Almighty, and this is more excellent than the gift they would receive. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: ""Peace!" a Word (of salutation) from a Lord Most Merciful!" (Ya Sin 58)

﴿ سَلَٰمٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبٍّ رَّحِيمٍ ﴾

The third is the statement of their Lord to them: "I am well-pleased with you." This would be, of a surety, greater than both the gift and salutation, as confirmed by His saying: But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah: that is the supreme felicity." (At-Tawbah 72)

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴾

I.e. greater than the bliss of Garden in which they are.

That is the excellence of the good pleasure of Allah with the servant, and it is a fruit of his contentment with Allah Almighty.

As for the narrations, a mention may be made of the following:

It is narrated that the Prophet "peace be upon him" asked a group of his companions: "Who are you (in faith)?" they said: "We are believers." He asked them: "What is the sign of your faith?" they said: "We persevere at the time of adversity, give thanks at the time of prosperity, and are contented with the fate of Allah Almighty (no matter how good or evil it might be)." On that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said to them: "You are really believers, by the Lord of the Ka'bah."

According to another version, he "peace be upon him" said: "Those are wise learned scholars who are about to (attain the rank of) Prophets because of their religious comprehension."

It is further narrated that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Blessed be he who is guided to Islam and his sustenance barely suffices for his minimum requirements of living, with which he is contented." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Fadalah Ibn Ubaid).

It is also narrated that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever is contented with the little sustenance from Allah Almighty, Allah then would be contented with the little deed from him." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talib).

It is narrated on the authority of one from the household of the Prophet "peace be upon him": "Verily, if Allah Almighty loves a servant, He would try him; and if he keeps patient, He would select him; and if he is contented, He would choose him." (Sahib Al-Firdaws on the authority of Ali).

It is further narrated that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "When it is the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty would create wings for a group of my people to fly therewith from their graves to the Garden of Paradise to graze and enjoy in them as they like. The angels would ask them: "Have you seen the reckoning?" they would say: "We have not seen any reckoning." They would further ask them: "Have you crossed the bridge (that is over the Hell)?"

they would answer: "We have not seen any such bridge." They would ask them once again: "Have you seen the Hell?" they would answer: "We have seen anything like that." The angels would then ask them: "To which people do you belong?" they would say: "To the people of Muhammad "peace be upon him"." They would say to them: "We beseech you by Allah to tell us about your deeds in the world." They would say: "We had two characteristics because of which we have attained that rank by virtue of Allah's mercy." They would ask them: "What are those?" they would say: "Whenever we were in seclusion, we felt shy of disobeying Him, and we were contented with the little that was doomed to us." On that the angels would say to them: "Then, this rank is due to you." (Ibn Hibban on the authority of Anas; but it is rejected since it contradicts the statement of Allah Almighty in the Qur'an: " Not one of you but will pass over it: This is, with your Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished." (Maryam 71)

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴾

The Prophet "peace be upon him" further said in another narration: "O assembly of poor! Be contented with Allah Almighty from the depth of your hearts, perchance you would obtain the reward of your poverty, otherwise, you would obtain nothing."

It is narrated from the children of Israel that they said to Moses "peace be upon him": "Ask your Lord for a thing which, if we do, He would be well-pleased with us because of it." Moses "peace be upon him" said: "O my God! You have heard what they said." On that he said: "O Moses! Tell them to be contented with Me." This is attested by the statement of our Prophet Muhammad "peace be upon him": "Whoever likes to know what he has with Allah Almighty, let him first consider what Allah Almighty has with him, for the position of a servant in the Sight of Allah Almighty is determined by the position of Allah Almighty in the heart of the servant." (Al-Hakim on the authority of Jabir).

It is narrated from the news of David "peace be upon him" that Allah Almighty said to him: "What do My allies have to do with their concern in this world? Indeed, concern removes from their hearts the sweetness of the private talk with Me. O David! My love for My allies should make them spiritual, not distressed (with anything evil in this world)."

It is narrated that Moses "peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! Guide me to a thing in order to do and obtain Your good pleasure because of it." Allah Almighty revealed to him: "My good pleasure lies in what you dislike, and in no way could you persevere for what you dislike." Moses "peace be upon him" said: "O my Lord! Guide me to it." He said: "My good pleasure lies in your contentment with My fate."

Moses "peace be upon him" said in his private talk with Allah Almighty: "O Lord! Which of Your creatures is the dearest to You?" He said: "He, who, if I even take away his beloved from him, would remain in agreement with Me." He further asked him: "Then, which of Your creatures is that with whom You are displeased?" He Almighty said: "He who seeks My guidance of him to anything, and when I doom anything to him, he would be displeased with My fate."

What is more severe than that is narrated, as Allah Almighty says: "I am Allah and there is no god other than Me. Whoever does not persevere on My trial, does not give thanks for My favor, and is not contented with My fate, then, let him take a lord other than Me." (At-Tabarani and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Abu Hind Ad-Dari).

More severe is the narration in which our Prophet "peace be upon him" related from Allah Almighty that He says: "I have decreed the matters, manipulated the affairs, and perfectly made all things: Whoever is contented, would obtain My good pleasure with him until he meets Me; and whoever is displeased would incur upon himself My displeasure with him until he meets Me." (This narration is reported but with different wording by At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Umamah).

According to a famous narration: Allah Almighty says: "I created both good and evil: Blessed be he whom I created for good and made good run on his hand; and woe to him whom I created for evil and made evil run on his hand; and woe to him who says disapprovingly: 'Why and how'." (Ibn Shahin on the authority of Abu Umamah).

It is narrated that one of the previous Prophets kept complaining to Allah of poverty, hunger and lice for ten years, and he received no answer. Then, Allah Almighty revealed to him: "How many your complaints are! As such your beginning was with Me before I created the heavens and the earth; and as such it went forward for you from Me; and as such I decreed upon you before I created this world: do you like Me to repeat the creation of this world for your sake, or do you like Me to replace the decree for your sake in order for what you like to prevail over what I like? By My Honor and Glory! If such complaints lurk in your breast once again, I would erase you from the register of Prophets."

It is further narrated that one of the young children of Adam "peace be upon him" used to ascend and descend on his back playfully, while he was lowering his head to the ground motionless and silent. One of his sons said to him: "O my father! Do you not see what this child is doing with you? Would that you forbid him to do so!" he said: "O my son! I have seen what you have never seen, and learnt what you have never learnt. I did a single movement, therewith I was caused to descend from the abode of dignity to the abode of humiliation, and from the abode of bliss to the abode of wretchedness; and I fear if I moved, I would be afflicted with what I know not."

It is further narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: "I served the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" for ten years, during which he never said to me of anything I did not do why I did not do it, or of anything I did why I did it, nor did he say of anything which was, would that it was not, or of anything which was not, would that it was; and if anyone of his family disputed with me, he would say to him: "Let him, if anything was decreed, it would have been." (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is narrated that Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "O David! You will and I will, and of course what I will should be. So, if you admit

what I will, I would suffice you what you will, and if you do not admit what I will, surely, I would trouble you in what you will, and nothing would be other than I will."

As for traditions, a mention may be made of the following:

Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" said: "The first of people to be invited to Paradise would be those who praise Allah Almighty in whichever state they are."

Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "I do not rejoice but at what is decreed (by Allah Almighty)." He was asked: "What you desire for?" he said: "What Allah Almighty decrees."

According to Maimun Ibn Muhran "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Whoever is not contented with the fate (and doom of Allah Almighty), there is no medicine for his foolishness."

According to Al-Fudail "may Allah have mercy upon him": "If you do not persevere on the ordainment of Allah Almighty, you would not be able to keep patient on what is doomed to yourself."

According to Abd-Al-Aziz Ibn Rawad "may Allah have mercy upon him": "It is not necessary to eat parley bread with vinegar, nor to put on wool and hair, but what counts is to be satisfied and pleased with Allah Almighty."

According to Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "To lick up a piece of fire which might burn what it burns and destroy what it destroys is dearer to me than to say of a thing which was, would that it was not, or of a thing which was not, would that it was."

It is further related that a man saw a sore in the leg of Muhammad Ibn Wasi' "may Allah have mercy upon him" thereupon he said to him: "I have pity for you because of this sore." On that Muhammad said: "I have been grateful to this sore since it appeared, for it did not appear in my eye."

It is related in one of Israeli tales that a man worshipped Allah Almighty for a long time and once he was shown in a dream that 'so and so, the female shepherd is your companion in Paradise.' He inquired about her, until he found her. He hosted her for three days in order to check up her deed, during which he spent the night standing (in prayer), whereas she spent the night sleeping, and he spent the day fasting, whereas she did not fast. In the end he said to her: "Do you not have any deed other than what I have seen from you?" She said: "By Allah, I do nothing more than what you have seen, other than which I do not know." He kept urging her to remember until she said: "I have only one simple characteristic, i.e. I have never been in adversity and hoped to be in prosperity, and I have never been sick and I hoped to be healthy, and I have never been in sun and I hoped to be in the shade." The worshipper put his hand over his head and said: "Is this only a simple characteristic? It is, by Allah, a great characteristic which servants fail to attain."

According to one of the righteous predecessors: "Allah Almighty likes that if He decrees a thing in the heaven, the inhabitants of the earth should be contented with His decree."

According to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him": "The peak of faith

is to persevere on the judgment and be contented with the fate."

According to Umar "Allah be pleased with him": "I do not care in whichever state of adversity or prosperity I become."

One day, Ath-Thawri "may Allah have mercy upon him" said and he was in the house of Rabi'ah "may Allah have mercy upon her: "O Allah! Be well-pleased with me." She said to him: "Do you not feel shy of Allah that you ask Him for His good pleasure while you yourself are not contented?" he said: "I pray to Allah for forgiveness." Ja'far Ibn Sulaiman said: "Then, when should the servant be contented with Allah Almighty?" she said: "When his joy of calamity is equal to his joy of favor."

According to Al-Fudail "may Allah have mercy upon him": "When both giving and withholding become equal in one's sight, then, he has become contented with Allah Almighty."

Ahmad Ibn Al-Hawari said: Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: "It is out of Allah's bounty that He accepts from His servants the same as the servants accept from their masters." I asked: "How is that?" he said: "Is it not that the servant's purpose from the people is that his master should be pleased with him?" I answered in the affirmative, thereupon he said: "Similarly, Allah's love for His servants is that they should be contented with Him."

According to Sahl "may Allah have mercy upon him": "The fortunes of servants from certainty (of faith) is in proportion to their fortune of contentment; and their fortune of contentment is in proportion to the extent of their living with Allah Almighty."

The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: ""It is out of Allah's wisdom and glory that He made both satisfaction and joy in contentment and certainty (of faith), and grief and anxiety in suspicion and discontentment." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

CHAPTER TWO

EXPLICATION OF REAL NATURE OF CONTENTMENT AND ITS NOTION WITH WHAT OPPOSES INCLINATION

It should be known to you that the one who argues that nothing opposes inclination except the patience, and that contentment is impossible, has indeed, denied love. If love for Allah Almighty is assured, as it engages the whole attention, no doubt, love develops contentment with the acts of the beloved, from two perspectives:

The first is that his sense of pain becomes ceaseless, to the extent that no matter how painful and aching his injury or wound might be, he feels not. The typical example is the fighter who might receive injury and, in the thick of his anger and fear, does not sense its pain, no matter how severe it might be, for his heart is entirely engaged. Moreover, if one gets an operation of cupping on his head while his heart is engaged, no doubt, he would feel no pain until the cupper finishes from the operation. That is because if the heart is engaged in anything to which it is wholly devoted, it perceives nothing other than it. The same is true of the lover, whose attention is wholeheartedly devoted to the vision or love of his beloved to the extent that anything to whose pain and grief

he is responsive while being in his normal state, might befall him, but he feels no pain, no matter how painful or gloomy it might be, due to his engagement in his love and attachment. This is in case he receives that from anyone else other than his beloved: Then, what do you think if he receives it from his beloved?

Indeed, the engagement in love and attachment is one of the greatest occupations that divert the heart from anything else. If it is imaginable in a little pain caused by a simple love, it also could be imaginable in a severe pain caused by a great love. Love, like pain, could be multiplied and intensified, and as well as the love for the beautiful external pictures perceived by the sense of sight might become strong, similarly, the love for the beautiful internal images perceived by the light of insight might also become strong. To be sure, the beauty and glory of the Divine presence are incomparable, to the extent that if something of it is revealed to anyone, he might be astounded and become unconscious so much that he might not sense anything occurring to him.

In this respect, it is narrated that the wife of Fath Al-Mawsili stumbled and the nail of her toe got broken, thereupon she smiled. It was said to her: "Do you not detect pain?" She said: "The pleasure of its reward has removed from my heart the bitterness of its pain."

It is also related that Sahl had an ailment from which he used to treat others but not himself, and when he was asked about that he said: "No doubt, the beating of the beloved does not ache."

The other perspective is that he perceives and feels the pain, but at the same time, he is contented with and desirous for it by his mind, even though it is unfavorable to him by disposition. The typical example is the one who seeks cupping and bloodletting: of course he feels the pain of both, but he is contented with and desirous for it, and would further be under obligation to him who does that for him. The same is true of the traveller in pursuit of profit: of course he perceives the trouble and difficulty he might suffer from the journey, but at the same time, his love for the fruit of the journey makes its difficulty and trouble seem pleasant to him.

If one is afflicted with a trial by Allah Almighty, and he is certain that its reward that is kept for him is more excellent that what he misses, he would be contented with and desirous for it. Moreover, he would love it, and be grateful to Allah for it. But it is possible that the love might be overwhelming so much to the extent that the lover's fortune from the beloved is only to seek his good pleasure, and nothing else. All of this is common among the people in their love to each other. It gains its significance only by observing the beauty of the external picture that is perceived only by sight, although this beauty is, in its reality, no more than skin stuffed with bone, flesh and blood, and it contains impurities and dirty things, and its beginning is from a dropped sperm, and its end to a putrefied corpse. As for the instrument that perceives that external beauty, it is the despicable eye which errs in what it sees in such a way that it magnifies the small and minimizes the big, brings close what is far, and far what is close, beautifies the ugly and defaces the beautiful.

If all of this is possible for the people in their relation with each other, then,

how should it be impossible in the love for the eternal beauty whose perfection is unlimited, and which is perceived by the light of the insight which never errs nor perishes by death in so much as it survives after death living in the Presence of Allah, and joyful of the sustenance that is given to it by Allah Almighty? This is clear if taken by consideration. It is also attested from the tales and statements of lovers.

According to Shaqiq Al-Balkhi "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Whoever sees the reward for adversity would never desire to have a way out of it."

According to Al-Junaid "may Allah have mercy upon him": I asked Sari As-Saqati: "Should the lover detect the pain of trial?" He answered in the negative, thereupon I asked: "And even if he is struck with the sword?" He said: "Yes, even if he is struck with the sword seventy strikes, one after another."

Another one said: "I love everything that He loves, and even if He loves fire, I love to enter fire (because He loves it)."

According to Bishr Ibn Al-Harith "may Allah have mercy upon him": "I came upon a man who received one thousand lashes in the East of Baghdad and he remained motionless and silent. Then he was carried to the prison. I followed him and asked him: "Why have you received those lashes?" he said: "Because I am a lover." I further asked him: "Then, why have you remained silent?" he said: "Because my beloved was beside me looking at me." I said to him: "Then, what do you think if you catch a glimpse of the Greater Beloved?" he made a cry so loud that he fell dead out of it.

According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh Ar-Razi "may Allah have mercy upon him": "If the inhabitants of Paradise look at (the glory and beauty of) Allah Almighty, their eyes would go into their hearts, out of the pleasure they receive from their vision of Allah Almighty for three hundred years and would never return to them. Then, what do you think of hearts that fall in between His beauty and glory? If they observe His glory, they would be taken by awe, and if they observe His beauty, they would be lost."

According to Bishr "may Allah have mercy upon him" once again: At first, I went to Abdan, and behold! There was a blind leper mad man who fell on the ground out of epilepsy, and ants gathered to eat his flesh. I raised his head and put it in my lap. When he restored his consciousness he asked: "Who is that parasite who interferes between me and my Lord? Were He to cut me to pieces, I would but increase in love for Him." Bishr commented: "Afterwards, I have never disapproved any displeasure between a servant and his Lord."

According to Abu Amr Muhammad Ibn Al-Ash'ath: "The people of Egypt remained four months during which they had no provision but their looking at the face of Yusuf As-Siddiq "peace be upon him": Whenever they became hungry, they would look at his face and be diverted by its beauty from the feeling of the pain of hunger. Moreover, in the Holy Qur'an there is what is more impressive than that, i.e. the women's cutting off their hands when they saw him for their engagement in observing his beauty to the extent that they felt no pain at all."

It is related that Jonah "peace be upon him" said to Gabriel: "Guide me to the one who worships Allah most among the inhabitants of the earth." He guided him to a man whom leprosy had torn his hand and feet and removed his sight. Then, he heard him saying: "O God! You have caused me to enjoy of them as much as You willed, and then deprived me of them as much as You willed, and kept for me the hope in You, O Most Kind, Beneficent."

It is narrated from Abdullah Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that one of his children fell ill and he grieved for him so much that the people said about him: "We fear this old man would be stricken if this child died." Then, the child died and Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" set out leading his funeral procession, and none was cheerful than him. When Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" was asked about that he said: "I grieved just out of pity and mercy for him, and when he died, we were contented with it."

It is narrated on the authority of Masruq "may Allah have mercy upon him" that he said: A man in the desert had a dog, a donkey and a cock. The cock used to awaken them for Fajr prayer, and the donkey was used to transport water and carry their tent for them, and the dog used to guard them. One day, a fox came and took the cock, thereupon they grieved for it so much. The man was righteous. He said: "May be it is good." Then, a wolf came and split open the belly of the donkey and killed it, for which they grieved so much. But the man said: "May be it is good." Then, the dog was afflicted and died, and he said: "May be it is good." In the morning of one day, they looked and behold! All people surrounding them were taken as captives and they were left. Those who were taken as captives were taken for what they had of the voices of dogs, donkeys and cocks. In this way, the destruction of those animals was for their benefit as decreed by Allah Almighty. Then, whoever knows what is hidden of the acts of Allah should necessarily be contented with them.

It is further related that Jesus "peace be upon him" came upon a blind leper paralyzed man whose flesh scattered about out of leprosy. He heard him saying: "All perfect praise be to Allah Who saved me from many diseases with which He tried a lot of His creatures." Jesus "peace be upon him" said to him: "O man! Which of trials I see that you do not have?" he said: "O Spirit of Allah! I am better than him in whose heart Allah did not place what He placed in my heart of His gnosis." He said to him: "Indeed, you have told the truth. Give me your hand." He gave it to him and behold! He turned to be the best and the most beautiful of people in features and appearance, after Allah Almighty had removed from him all that he had. He then accompanied Jesus "peace be upon him" and worshipped Allah while being in his company.

Once, the leg of Urwah Ibn Az-Zubair "may Allah have mercy upon him" was cut off because of a severe disease that afflicted it, thereupon he said: "All perfect praise be to Allah Who has taken only one from me. By Allah, if You have taken one from me, You have left one for me, and if You have afflicted one, You have cured the other." Moreover, that night, he did not leave his devotional recital.

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" used to say: "Both poverty and

richness are two riding mounts, and I do not care whichever of them I ride. If it is poverty, patience lies in it; and if it is richness, generosity lies in it."

It was said to a Gnostic: "Have you attained the finale of contentment with Allah Almighty?" he said: "As for the finale, it is not, but I have attained the station of contentment, to the extent that were He to make me a bridge over Hell for the creatures to cross to Paradise and then were He to fill Hell with me in fulfillment of His oath, and to be sacrificed for all the people, I would love that as it is His decision, and be contented with it as it is doomed to me."

It is narrated that Imran Ibn Al-Hussain "Allah be pleased with him" spent the last thirty years lying on his back for he had ailment in his abdomen, and an opening was made in his bed in order to be able to answer the call of nature while lying. One day Mutarrif and his brother Al-Ala' came to visit him and Mutarrif went on weeping. He asked him: "Why are you weeping?" He said: "For this difficult state in which you are." He said to him: "Weep not, for as Allah Almighty likes it to me, I should necessary like it for myself." Then he said to him: "Let me tell you something may Allah benefit you with it, but do not announce it until I die. The angels come to visit me and I become affable with them, and they greet me and I hear their salutation, therewith I know that this trial is not punishment in so much as a cause of that great bliss. Whoever witnesses this in his trial, how should he not be contented with it?"

When Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas "Allah be pleased with him" came to Mecca, and he had lost his sight, the people hurried to him and ask him to invoke good upon them, and his invocation used to receive answer from Allah Almighty. He invoked for whomever asked him. Abdullah Ibn As-Sa'ib "Allah be pleased with him" said: I went to him and he recognized me and said: "Are you the reciter of the inhabitants of Mecca?" I answered in the affirmative. (He related a story which ends with the following): I said to him: "O uncle! You invoke good upon the people! Would that you invoke Allah for yourself that He should restore your sight to you!" he smiled and said: "O my son! The fate of Allah Almighty is dearer to me than my sight."

On another occasion, a Sufi man lost his child and it was said to him: "Would that you ask Allah Almighty to restore him to you!" on that he said: "To make objection to His fate is more difficult on me than to lose my child."

One of the worshippers said: "I committed a great sin because of which I have been weeping for sixty years." He strove his utmost in worship to repent from that sin. It was said to him: "What is that sin?" he said: "I said once of a thing which was, 'would that it was not!'"

In sum, the internal insight is more truthful than the external sight, and the beauty of the Divine Presence is greater and better than all kinds of beauty. Every kind of beauty in the world is but a part of that primal beauty. It is true that whoever loses his sight denies the beauty of pictures, and whoever loses his hearing denies the pleasure of harmonious melodies and tones. Similarly, whoever loses heart should necessarily deny these pleasures which lie only in the heart.

CHAPTER THREE
EXPLICATION OF THE FACT THAT INVOCATION NEVER CONTRADICTS CONTENTMENT

It should be known to you that invocation is used in our worship and remembrance of Allah Almighty; and this is attested by the many supplications and invocations handed down from the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" therewith he used to supplicate on different occasions, and so did the Prophets and Messengers before him, as we have already clarified in the Book of Supplications. Moreover, Allah Almighty praised some of His servants who invoke Him saying: " they used to call on Us with love and reverence, and humble themselves before Us." (Al-Anbiya 90)

﴿ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ ﴾

As for disapproval, unfavorableness of and displeasure with sins and transgressions, Allah Almighty praised it, and further dispraised the people for their satisfaction and contentment with that saying: " Those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, but are pleased and satisfied with the life of the Present, and those who heed not Our Signs." (Yunus 7)

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنُّوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ ﴾

He further said: " They prefer to be with (the women), who remain behind (at home): their hearts are sealed and so they understand not." (At-Tawbah 87)

﴿ رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴾

According to a famous tradition: "Whoever sees an evildoing which he accepts seems as if he has done it."

According to another Hadith the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "The one who guides to evil is like him who does it." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Anas).

According to Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "Although a servant might not do an evildoing, his sin is equal to its perpetrator." It was said to him: "How is that?" he said: "That is because he accepts it."

According to another tradition: "If a servant is killed in the East (with no just cause), and a man in the West accepts his killing, he would be a partner in killing him."

As for good deeds and avoiding evil, Allah Almighty commanded the people to compete each other saying: " and for this let those aspire, who have aspirations." (Al-Mutaffiffin 26)

﴿ وَفِي ذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴾

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Envy is forbidden except in two things: a man whom Allah Almighty has given wisdom which he circulates among the people, and teaches to them; and a man whom Allah Almighty has given property and directed to consume it in its right places." According to another version: "...and a man whom Allah Almighty has given (the faculty of memorizing and reciting the) Qur'an with which he stands at night

and day (in prayer), thereupon the other says: "Were Allah Almighty to give me the like of this, I would do the same as he does." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah; and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

As for aversion for the disbeliever, disapproval of their disbelief and displeasure with their evil deeds, what is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith is beyond calculation. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " Let not the Believers take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than Believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah: except by way of precaution, that you may guard yourselves from them." (Al Imran 28)

﴿ لَّا يَتَّخِذِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ فِى شَىْءٍ إِلَّآ أَن تَتَّقُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ تُقَىٰةً ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

And: " O you who believe! take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors; they are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily Allah guides not a people unjust." (Al-Ma'idah 51)

﴿ ۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ ﴾

And: " Thus do We make the wrong-doers turn to each other, because of what they earn." (Al-An'am 129)

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّى بَعْضَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ ﴾

According to a certain tradition: "Indeed, Allah Almighty has taken the covenant from every faithful believer to dislike all the hypocrites, and from every hypocrite to dislike all believers."

The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "The man would be gathered in the company of whomever he loves."

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever loves a people and takes them as friends and allies, would be gathered in their company on the Day of Judgement." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Qarsafah; and Ibn Adi on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him").

The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "The most trustworthy handhold of faith is the love in (the religion of) Allah Almighty, and the aversion in (the religion of) Allah Almighty." (Ahmad).

However, the evidences of that have already been mentioned in the love and aversion in the religion of Allah Almighty in the Book of Etiquettes of Companionship and the Book of Enjoining right and Forbidding evil.

But even, you may argue: "There are many Qur'anic Verses and Prophetic narrations that command people to be contented with the fate of Allah Almighty. Then, if sins are committed not by fate and decree of Allah Almighty, this would be quite impossible, if not to affect monotheism; and if they are committed by fate and decree of Allah Almighty, then, to dislike them is to dislike the fate of Allah Almighty. Then, what is the way to accommodate both contradictory notions? How could we accommodate both

contentment and aversion together?".

In reply to that, it should be known to you that this matter is abstruse on the weak-minded whose understanding falls short of perceiving the mysteries of knowledge. Some people were put to confusion because of it to the extent that they saw that silence from evildoing is a station of contentment which they called "good conduct", and of a surety, this is quite ignorance. Let us say that both contentment and aversion contradict each other when they are on one thing from one perspective. It is not contradictory to accept a thing from one perspective, and dislike it from another perspective. For example, the enemy of you and of your enemy might die: in this way, you dislike his death from the perspective of his being the enemy of your enemy, and, at the same time, like his death from the perspective of his being your enemy. Similarly, sin has two perspectives: one pertains to Allah Almighty, as being an outcome of the act, preference, power and will of Allah Almighty, and from this perspective, it should be accepted, in submission to the Sovereign of the dominion, and satisfaction with what He does. The other perspective pertains to the servant, as being a fruit of his earning, described as evil, and given the sign that make it hateful to Allah Almighty and to him; and from this perspective, it should be disapproved.

It is due on every servant who loves Allah Almighty to dislike such as Allah dislikes, be displeased with such as Allah Almighty is displeased with, and become enemy to such as Allah Almighty drives away from His presence. To be sure, such as driven far from the degrees of closeness to Allah should be hateful and loathsome to all lovers of Allah Almighty, in agreement with the beloved, by showing aversion and anger with such as with whom the beloved is angry, through driving him away from His presence.

In this framework we should understand all narrations and traditions about love and aversion for the Sake of Allah Almighty, strictness and severity on the disbelievers, and at the same time, contentment and satisfaction with the fate and decree of Allah as being the fate of Allah Almighty. All of this stems from the mystery of preordainment which we have no concession to disclose, i.e. both good and evil are done by the will and power of Allah Almighty, but evil is hateful and good is accepted. Whoever claims that evil is not from Allah is quite ignorant; and the same is true of him who claims that both are from Him, without differentiation between contentment (with good) and aversion (for evil): this is out of deficiency of understanding.

It is impermissible to disclose this mystery, and it is rather preferable to keep silent from it, and get disciplined with the etiquette of Sharia. In this issue, the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Preordainment is the mystery of Allah Almighty, so disclose it not." (Abu Na'im in his Hilyah on the authority of Ibn Umar; and Ibn Adi on the authority of A'ishah, and both are weak). This pertains to the science of Mukashafah (Revelation). But our purpose now is to explicate the possibility to accommodate both contentment with the fate of Allah Almighty on the one hand, and aversion for sins and transgressions on the other hand, given that they are doomed by Allah Almighty. This purpose has become clear with no need to disclose the mystery of preordainment.

With this, it is also clear that supplication for forgiveness, and invocation for protection from committing sins and transgressions and acquisition of all means that help one fulfill his acts of religion do not contradict contentment with the fate of Allah Almighty. Allah Almighty enjoined upon the servants to seek His aid with supplication in order that invocation would extract from them the purity of remembrance, submissiveness of heart, and compassion of imploration, so that it would polish the heart, open the door of revelation, and bring about the means of kindness of Allah Almighty. Similarly, carrying the mug and drinking water do not contradict the contentment with the fate of Allah Almighty as regards thirst. As well as drinking water to quench thirst is a cause manipulated by the causer of causes, the same is true of invocation, which is a cause manipulated and enjoined by Allah Almighty, the Causer of causes. We have already mentioned that adherence to causes according to the established way of Allah on earth does not contradict reliance. Thus, it also does not contradict contentment for both contentment and reliance are adjacent. It is true that to disclose trial by way of making a complaint, and disapproving it within the heart to be done by Allah Almighty contradict contentment; whereas to disclose trial by way of giving thanks for it, and showing the power of Allah Almighty does not contradict contentment.

In this respect, one of the righteous predecessors said: "It is out of good contentment with the fate of Allah Almighty not to say 'It is hot by way of complaining." Of course, this applies to summer, and if it is in winter, it would be by way of giving thanks. To be sure, complaint contradicts contentment with the fate of Allah in whichever state one might be, and the same is true of criticizing food which contradicts the contentment with the fate of Allah Almighty, for to criticize the making is to criticize the maker, and all things are the making of Allah Almighty. Similarly, the statement: "Poverty is a trial and an ordeal, dependents a cause of trouble and anxiety, and work a source of toiling and difficulty", criticizes the contentment with the fate of Allah. Nay! One should submit manipulation to the manipulator, and the dominion to its sovereign, and rather say the same as Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I do not care whether I have become rich or poor, for I do not know which of them is good for me."

CHAPTER FOUR

EXPLICATION OF THE FACT THAT FLIGHT FROM OR CRITICISM OF PLACES OF SINS AND DISOBEDIENCE DOES NOT DISAPPROVE OF CONTENTMENT

It should be known to you that the weak-minded might think, though falsely, that the forbiddance given by the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" to leave the town in which the plague breaks out extends to imply forbiddance to leave places where sins are committed, under pretext that each of both is to flee from the fate of Allah Almighty; and this is quite impossible. The reason which lies behind this forbiddance is that were the people to leave the town after the breakout of plague in it, all the healthy would then go and

leave the sick neglected with none to take care of them, which would hasten on their destruction. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" likened it, on many occasions, to flight from the battlefield. Were it to be flight from the fate of Allah, he would not have given permission to those who are close to such affected town to turn away and not enter it. We have already mentioned the ruling on that in the Book of Reliance. Being so, it is clear then that to flee from places where sins are committed is not to flee from the fate of Allah Almighty. Nay! It is out of fate to flee from that from which one should inevitably flee.

Similarly, to criticize the places where sins are committed, and the means and causes that stimulate them for the purpose of defacing sins is not blameworthy. The righteous predecessors used to do so to the extent that a group of people agreed on criticizing Baghdad publicly, and calling for flight from it. According to Ibn Al-Mubarak: "I have been to the East and West, and have never seen a town more evil than Baghdad." It was said to him: "How is that?" he said: "It is a town in which the favor of Allah Almighty is despised, and disobedience of Allah Almighty is regarded with slightness." When he went to Khurasan it was said to him: "How have you seen Baghdad?" He said: "I have never seen in it but an angry policeman, a covetous trader, or a perplexed reciter." Think not that this is backbiting, for he did not refer to a particular person, but he simply intended to warn the people. He used to set out on journey to Mecca, and his stay in Baghdad in expectation for the caravan was sixteen days, and he used to give in charity sixteen Dinars, one for each day he spent there.

Furthermore, a group of people such as Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz and Ka'b Al-Ahbar criticized Iraq. It is related that Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" asked his freed slave: "Where do you live?" he said: "I live in Iraq." He said: "What do you do in it? I heard that none lives in it but that Allah Almighty assigns to him a companion of trial."

One day Ka'b Al-Ahbar "Allah be pleased with him" mentioned Iraq and said: "There lies in it nine-tenths the evil and the chronic disease." It was said that good was divided into ten parts, nine of which are in Sham and the remaining tenth in Iraq, and that evil was divided into ten parts, nine of which are in Iraq and the remaining tenth in Sham.

According to a traditionalist: We were sitting with Al-Fudail when a Sufi wrapped in his garment came, and he was made to sit near him. He turned his face to him and asked him: "From where are you?" he said: "From Baghdad." He then turned away from him and said: "One of them comes to us in the uniform of monks and when you ask him where he lives, he tells you that he lives in the nest of wrongdoers."

According to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Had it not been for those disciples who are attached to us, we would have preferred to come out of this town." It was said to him: "Then, where do you like to live?" he said: "In the bordering openings."

This indicates to the fact that whoever is tried with a town in which sins Aare

committed, and good is little, he has no excuse to continue to stay in it: on the contrary, he should abscond it. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they say: "In what (plight) were you?" They reply: "Weak and oppressed were we in the earth." They say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (from evil)?" Such men will find their abode in Hell, what an evil refuge!" (An-Nisa' 97)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا۟ فِيمَ كُنتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾ ﴾

But if he is prevented because of dependents or relation with anything whatever it might be, he should not be contented with his state in it, nor self-reassured of it: But he should be always scared, with the following supplication running on his tongue: "Our Lord! rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from you one who will protect; and raise for us from you one who will help!" (An-Nisa' 75)

﴿ وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾ ﴾

That is because if wrongness becomes widespread, distress would descend and destroy all the people including even the obedient among them, in realization of the statement of Allah Almighty: "And fear tumult or oppression, which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong: and know that Allah is strict in punishment." (Al-Anfal 25)

﴿ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ فِتْنَةً لَّا تُصِيبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً ۖ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾

However, there is difference among the religious scholars over which of the three stations is the best: a man hopes to die out of longing for meeting Allah Almighty, and a man prefers to live in order to serve his Lord Almighty, and a man says: "I never prefer anything, but rather I would be contented with what Allah Almighty wills." When this difference was raised to a Gnostic he said: "No doubt, the contented one is the best, for he has the least aspiration."

One day, Wuhaib Ibn Al-Wurd, Sufyan Ath-Thawri and Yusuf Ibn Asbat gathered together, and Ath-Thawri said: "Before today, I disliked the sudden death, and today I hope to be die suddenly." Yusuf asked him: "What is the reason for that?" he said: "For I fear affliction." Yusuf further said: "But as for me, I do not like to survive longer." Sufyan asked him about the reason and he said: "It may be that I would coincide with a day on which I would repent to Allah Almighty and work righteous deeds." When Wuhaib was asked about his opinion he said: "I never prefer anything. I like better what is dearer to Allah." On that Ath-Thawri kissed him in between his eyes and said to him: "You are a spiritual, by the Lord of the Ka'bah."

CHAPTER FIVE
EXPLICATION OF MANY STATEMENTS OF LOVERS

Allah Almighty said about His lovers (as related from Him): "My allies are

under My domes, and none knows them other than Me."

In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "How many a disheveled one, covered with dust, having two coarse woolen garments, of whom the people are careless, and if he takes oath that Allah should do a thing, Allah Almighty would fulfill his oath." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" further said: "The servant would not complete his faith until the little becomes dearer to him than the much, and to be anonymous dearer to him than to be famous." (Sahib Al-Firdaws on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talhah).

The Prophet "peace be upon him" said too: "If anyone has the following three characteristics, he shall have his faith complete: Not to fear, for the Sake of Allah, the blame of a blamer, not to show off with anything of his deed, and if two things are offered to him, one for the world and the other for the hereafter, he would prefer the thing of the hereafter." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" also said: "No servant will have his faith complete until he obtains the following three characteristics: If he grows angry, his anger would not cause him to deviate from the truth, and if he is contented, his contentment would not cause him to do falsehood, and if he has power over anything, he would not get what is not due to him." (At-Tabarani).

According to another narration, the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever is given the following three characteristics has been given the like of what was given to the family of David "peace be upon him": Justice in both states of contentment and anger, moderation in both states of richness and poverty, and fear of Allah in secret and public."

Those are the conditions mentioned by the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" for those endued with faith. Wonder at him who claims the knowledge of religion and has in his heart even no atom of any of those conditions. According to a certain tradition, Allah Almighty revealed to one of His Prophets: "I only take for My bosom friend such as never wearies to remember Me, is not engaged with anything other than Me, nor gives preference to anything over Me, and even were he to be burnt with fire, he would not feel the pain of the fire, and were he to be cut off by saws, he would not feel the pain of iron."

Whoever does not attain this degree of overwhelming love, then, how should he know what is beyond love of revelations and marvels? All of this is beyond love, and love is beyond the perfection of faith; and the stations of faith and its degrees of increase and decrease are beyond calculation. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" to Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him": "No doubt, Allah Almighty has given you faith as much as is equal to the faith of all who believed in Him among my nation, and He has given me faith as much as is equal to the faith of all who believed in Him among mankind." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Al-Harith Al-A'war from Ali Ibn Abu Talib).

According to another narration, the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Verily, Allah Almighty has three hundred characteristics, and whoever meets Him while having any of them, along with monotheism, would enter Paradise." Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" said: "O Messenger of Allah! Do I have any of them?" the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "You have all of them O Abu Bakr; and the dearest of them to Allah Almighty is munificence." (This is reported by At-Tabarani on the authority of Anas).

The Prophet "peace be upon him" further said: "I saw a balance hanging from the sky and I was placed in a pan and my nation in the other pan, and I overweighed them; and then Abu Bakr was placed in a pan, and the people of my nation were brought and placed in the other pan, and I also overweighed them." (This is reported by Ahmad on the authority of Abu Umamah).

However, the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" was wholeheartedly devoted in love to Allah Almighty to the extent that his heart did not expand to the intimate friendship of anyone else. In confirmation of that he "peace be upon him" said: "Were I to take a bosom friend from the people, I would have taken Abu Bakr as my bosom friend, but your companion (referring to himself) is the bosom friend of Allah Almighty." (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Now, it is of great benefit to conclude the book with many statements about the love for Allah Almighty:

According to Sufyan: "Love (for Allah) is to follow the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him"" or to persist in remembrance of Allah according to another one, or to give preference to the beloved according to a third, or to dislike to survive in this world. All of those statements are but fruits of love. As for love itself, we would not discuss it now.

One of the lovers said: "Love is a kind of attachment to the beloved, that is beyond the power of hearts to perceive, and the faculty of tongues to express."

According to Al-Junaid: "Allah Almighty forbade love to anyone who is attached to anything (other than Him)." He said once again: "Every love should be for compensation and once the compensation disappears, it should necessarily disappear."

According to Dhun-Nun: "Tell such as loves Allah Almighty to beware of humiliating himself to anyone else other than Allah Almighty."

It was said to Ash-Shibli: "Describe to us the Gnostic and the lover (for Allah)." He said: "As for the Gnostic, if he speaks (with what he knows), he would be ruined; and as for the lover, if he keeps silent, he would be ruined."

One day, Rabi'ah Al-Adawiyyah said: "Who is that who could guide us to our beloved?" one of her servant-maids said: "Our beloved is with us, but the world has severed us from Him."

According to Ibn Al-Jalla': "Allah Almighty revealed to Jesus "peace be upon him" the following: 'If I know the innermost secret of My servant and do not detect in it the love for this world and the hereafter, I then would fill it with My love, and safeguard it with My safeguard.'"

According to Ibrahim Ibn Adham: "O my God! You know for certain that Paradise does not counterbalance in my sight a mosquito's wing, in comparison

with what you honored me of Your love, and removed my loneliness with Your remembrance, and devoted me wholeheartedly to meditate Your magnificence and grandeur."

According to As-Sari: "Whoever loves Allah Almighty lives; and whoever inclines to this world deviates (from the right direction); and the foolish goes and returns in vain; and the mindful is he who inspects his defects."

It was said to Rabi'ah: "How do you love the Messenger "peace be upon him"?" she said: "By Allah, I love him so much, but my love for the Creator has engaged me from the love for the creatures."

He "peace be upon him" was asked about the best of deeds, thereupon he said: "To be contented with Allah Almighty, and love him."

According to Abu Yazid: "The lover loves neither the world nor the hereafter, but loves only his Master and Lord Almighty."

It is said: "Love is to be close to the beloved joyfully and cheerfully."

It is further said: "The lover is dealt with according to four ranks: love, reverence, modesty and exaltation, and the best of them all are exaltation and love for both are brought with the inhabitants of Paradise in Paradise, and the others are taken away from them."

According to Haram Ibn Hayyan: "If the faithful believer knows Allah Almighty, he loves Him, and once he loves Him, he devotes himself in love to Him, and once he detects the sweetness of devotion to Him, he does not look at this world lustfully nor at the hereafter desirously, since this sweetness detains him in this world, and relieves him in the hereafter."

According to Abdullah Ibn Muhammad: I heard a worshipping woman saying while shedding tears: "By Allah, I have detested this life, so much that were death to be a commodity, I would buy it out of longing for Allah Almighty and in love for meeting Him." I asked her: "Are you confident of your work?" she said: "No, but because I love Him and have good assumption of Him, do you think He would punish me and I love Him?"

It is related that Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "Were those who turn back from me to know how I expect them, how I am kind to them, and how I have longing for them to leave sins, surely, they would have died out of longing for me, and their joints would have been cut off because of My love. O David! This is My will concerning those who turn back from Me, then, what do you think about My will concerning those who turn to Me (in love)? O David! The servant needs Me most when he dispenses with Me, and I am the Most Merciful for My servant when he turns back from Me, and My servant becomes the most excellent when he returns to Me."

According to Abu Khalid As-Saffar: One of the Prophets met a worshipper and said to him: "O assembly of worshippers! You act upon a thing upon which we, company of Prophets, never act. You act upon fear and hope, whereas we act upon love and longing (for Allah Almighty)."

According to Ash-Shibli: Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him" the following: "O David! My remembrance is available only to those who remember Me, My Paradise to these who obey Me, My visit to those who have

longing for Me, and I am for the lovers in particular."

Allah Almighty revealed to Adam "peace be upon him": "O Adam! Whoever loves a beloved should necessarily give trust to his words, and whoever is affable with a beloved should necessarily be contented with his deeds, and whoever has longing for his beloved should necessarily be serious in his movement towards him."

Al-Khawas used to strike his breast with his hand saying: "How longing I am for Him Who sees me and I see Him not!"

According to Al-Junaid: "The Prophet Jonah "peace be upon him" kept on weeping until he became blind, on standing (the night in prayer) until his body got curved, and on praying until he got paralyzed, and then said: 'By Your Honor and Glory! Had there been an ocean of fire between You and me, I would have plunged it and crossed it to You out of longing for You.'"

It is narrated on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I asked the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" about his sunnah and he said: "Gnosis is my capital, reasoning the foundation of my religion, love (for Allah) my basis, longing (for meeting Him) my vehicle, remembrance of Allah my companion, confidence my treasure, grief my friend, knowledge my weapon, patience my garment, contentment my booty, destitution (a source of) my pride, asceticism my craft, certainty (of faith) my power, truthfulness my intercessor, obedience my love, Jihad my conduct, and the comfort of my eyes is in prayer."

That is the end of the Book of Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment, and it would be followed by the Book of Intention, Sincerity and Truthfulness, Allah willing.

Book seven: Intention, sincerity and truth

It is the seventh book of the quarter of saviors of the revival of religion's sciences

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

We praise Allah Almighty with gratitude, believe in him with certainty of faith, and admit His Oneness with truth. We testify that there is none worthy of worship except for Allah, the Lord of the worlds, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who obligates men, jinn and angels to worship Him Alone with sincerity as confirmed by His statement: "And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being True (in faith)." (Al-Bayyinah 5)

﴿ وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓاْ إِلَّا لِيَعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مُخۡلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ حُنَفَآءَ ﴾

So, Allah Almighty does not want but the sincere religion, for He is not in need of the partnership of all partners.

Allah's blessing and peace as much as it could be upon His Prophet Muhammad, the chief of the Messengers, and upon all the Prophets and Messengers, and upon his pure and good family and companions.

Coming to the point: It has been revealed to the masters of heart, by the insight of faith and the light of the Qur'an that happiness could be obtained only by knowledge and worship. All the people are given to destruction except for the learned, and all the learned are given to destruction except for the workers among them, and all workers are given to destruction except for the sincere (in faith) among them, and the sincere are on the verge of a great risk: work without intention is a great suffering, and intention without sincerity is showing off, that is closer to hypocrisy and disobedience, and sincerity without truthfulness and certainty is useless. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said about every deed with which Allah Almighty is not intended: "And We shall turn to whatever deeds they did (in this life), and We shall make such deeds as floating dust scattered about." (Al-Furqan 23)

﴿ وَقَدِمۡنَآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُواْ مِنۡ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلۡنَٰهُ هَبَآءً مَّنثُورًا ﴾

By my life, how should one make good his intention who does not know the real nature of intention? How should one whose intention is good be sincere unless he knows the real nature of sincerity? Moreover, how should a sincere one be demanded to be true to his sincerity unless he knows the real nature of truthfulness? So, the first duty of every servant who wants to obey Allah Almighty is to learn intention in order to obtain knowledge, and then make it good by work, after understanding the real nature of sincerity and truthfulness, which are the servant's means to salvation. We are going to explicate those meanings in three chapters:

Chapter one: On the real nature and meaning of intention

Chapter two: On sincerity: Its real nature and meaning
Chapter three: On the real nature and meaning of truthfulness

CHAPTER ONE: INTENTION

It has the following topics:
Explication of virtue of intention
Explication of the real nature of intention
Explication of the fact that intention is better than deed
Explication of deeds that are related to the intention
Explication of the fact that intention is beyond choice

Explication Of Virtue Of Intention

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Deeds (their correctness and rewards) depend upon intentions, and every person gets but what he has intended. So whoever emigrated for worldly benefits, or for a woman to marry, his emigration is for what he emigrated for."" (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab).

It is further narrated that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "The majority of the martyrs from among my people are those who die on their beds, and how many a man who is killed while fighting between both rows and Allah Almighty knows best his real intention." (Ahmad on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

Allah Almighty further said: "if they wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation: for Allah has full knowledge, and is acquainted with all things." (An-Nisa' 35)

﴿ إِن يُرِيدَآ إِصْلَـٰحًا يُوَفِّقِ ٱللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ﴾

Thus He Almighty made intention a cause of reconciliation.

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah Almighty never regards your faces and property, but He rather considers your hearts and deeds." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah). He Almighty considers hearts for they are the places of intention.

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" further said: "Verily, a servant might do good deeds with which the angels ascend in sealed books, and are put in front of Allah Almighty, thereupon He says: "Throw away this book for he did not intend My Countenance with what it contains." Then He calls the angels: "Write for him such and such deeds! Write for him such and such deeds!" the angels say: "O Lord! He did nothing of that." He Almighty then says: "But he intended to do it."" (Ad-Daraqatni on the authority of Anas).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Kabshah Al-Anmari that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The example of (the people of) this nation is like the example of four persons: A man whom Allah gives both property and knowledge, upon which he acts in his property, which he spends on what is right; and a man whom Allah gives knowledge but He gives him no property, thereupon he says: 'Had I been given the like of what so and so had been given, surely, I would have done in it (the property) the same

as he does.' Both are equal in the reward; and a man whom Allah gives property, but no knowledge, and he misuses his property, which he spends on what is wrong; and a man whom Allah gives neither knowledge nor property, thereupon he says: 'Had I been given the like of what so and so had been given, surely, I would have done in it (the property) the same as he does.' Both are equal in sin." (Ibn Majah). Do you not see how the one who has not shared him who has just with the intention in the good deeds as well as in sins?

It is further narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said when he set out for the holy battle of Tabuk: "In Medina, there are people who, we neither cut a valley nor trample a place that fills the disbelievers with rage, nor spend a spending, nor are stricken by hunger, but that they would share us in (the reward of) that while they are in Medina." They asked: "How is that O Messenger of Allah and they are not with us?" he "peace be upon him" said: "They have been detained by a legal excuse, thereupon they have shared us with their good intention." (Al-Bukhari and Abu Dawud).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever emigrates and he intends anything with his migration, (the reward of) that (intention) would be for him." A man emigrated and married a woman from us, for which he was called the Emigrant of Umm Qais. (This is reported by At-Tabarani).

According to a certain tradition, a man was killed in the Cause of Allah, and he was called the Killed of the donkey for he fought a man to take his belongings and donkey, and he was killed, and attributed to his intention.

It is narrated on the authority of Ubadah Ibn As-Samit "Allah be pleased with him" from the Prophet "peace be upon him" that he said: "Whoever fights with the intention of getting only a she-kid's rope, he would have only (the reward of) what he intended." (An-Nasa'i).

It is narrated on the authority of Ya'li Ibn Umayyah that he said: My father said: I sought the aid of a man to fight besides me, and he said to me: "No, unless you fix a charge to me for that." I fixed a charge for that to him. I made a mention of that to the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" who said: "He has from his world and hereafter only the charge you have fixed to him." (At-Tabarani and Abu Dawud).

According to an Israeli tale, a man came upon a heap of sandhills and it was a time of starvation, thereupon he said (to himself): "Had they been foodstuff, I would have distributed it among the people." On that Allah Almighty revealed to the Prophet of their time: "Tell him that Allah Almighty has accepted your charity, appreciated your good intention, and given you reward for your hope of being foodstuff and you would have given it in charity."

According to a famous tradition: "Whoever intends to do a good deed and he does not do it, it would be written as a good deed for him."

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr "Allah be pleased with him" that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever intends only this world, Allah Almighty makes poverty in front of him, and causes him to leave the

world while being the most covetous of it; and whoever intends only the hereafter, Allah Almighty makes his independence within his heart, recompenses him with what he loses in the world, and causes him to leave it while being the most abstinent from it." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Zaid Ibn Thabit).

It is narrated on the authority of Umm Salamah "Allah be pleased with her" that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" made a mention of an army which the earth would be caused to swallow up at Al-Baida', thereupon she said: "O Messenger of Allah! It would have such as forced and such as hired (to fight)." On that he "peace be upon him" said: "They would be mustered according to their intentions." (This is reported by Muslim and Abu Dawud).

It is further narrated on the authority of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" having said: "Verily, those who fight each other would be raised according to their intentions." (This is reported by Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is also narrated that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "When both rows of fighters face each other, the angels descend and enlist the people according to their ranks: so and so fights for the sake of this world, so and so fights out of zeal, so and so fights out of fanaticism. Behold! Do not say then that so and so was killed in the Cause of Allah. Indeed, whoever fights only in order for the word of Allah Almighty to be superior really fights in the Cause of Allah." (Ibn Al-Mubarak ending it with Ibn Mas'ud; and Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Musa but with a different wording).

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Every servant would be raised on the same intention on which he dies." (This is reported by Muslim).

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Bakrah "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "If two Muslims face each other with their swords, both the killer and the killed would be in the fire (of Hell)." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah! That is the (destiny of the) killer. Then, what is wrong with the killed?" he "peace be upon him" said: "He also has the intention to kill his foe." (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is also narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever marries a woman on a certain dower which he has no intention to pay, then, is regarded an adulterer (in his relation with her); and whoever takes a loan which he has no intention to pay back is considered a thief." (Ibn Majah; and Ahmad on the authority of Suhaib).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever gets himself perfumed for the sake of Allah Almighty would come on the Day of Judgement with his smell more pleasant than the smell of musk; and whoever gets himself perfumed for the sake of anyone else other than Allah Almighty would come on the Day of Judgement with his odor more stinking than the odor of the carcass." (Abu Al-Walid As-Saffar on the authority of Ishaq Ibn Abu Talhah).

As for the traditions, a mention may be made of the following:

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: “The best of deeds is to do what is enjoined by Allah Almighty, to abstain from what is forbidden by Allah Almighty, and make true one’s intention in what is with Allah Almighty.”

Salim Ibn Abdullah wrote to Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz the following message: “It should be known to you that Allah Almighty is in the aid of a servant as much as is in proportion to his intention: if one has his intention perfectly good, the aid of Allah to him would be perfect, and as much as it decreases, the aid of Allah to him decreases accordingly.”

According to a righteous predecessor: “How many a little deed that becomes great by the good intention; and how many a great deed that becomes little by the evil intention.”

According to Dawud At-Ta’i: “piety is the ambition of the dutiful: If he is attached to this world even by all of his organs, his good intention should necessarily return him one day to good; and the reverse is true of the ignorant.”

According to Ath-Thawri: “They used to learn how to be sincere in their intention to work in the same way as you learn work.”

According to a religious scholar: “Seek the intention for work before you seek work, and as long as you intend good, you are good.”

One of the beginners on the path visited the religious scholars and said to them: “Who could guide me to a work to do relentlessly for the Sake of Allah Almighty, for I would not like that an hour of night and day comes upon me without being one of the workers of Allah Almighty.” it was said to him: “I have found your need: do good for the Sake of Allah Almighty as much as is within your capacity, and if you weary or intermit, then, intend to do it, for the intention to do a thing is like doing it.”

A righteous predecessor said: “No doubt, the favors of Allah He bestows upon you is beyond your calculation, and your sins are too hidden from you to know. But at least, be repentant in the morning and evening, perchance (the sins you commit in the intervals) between both ends of the day would be forgiven for you.”

According to Jesus "peace be upon him": “Blessed be an eye which sleeps with no intention to do evil, and gets up on no sin.”

According to Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him": “The people would be raised on the Day of Judgement according to their intentions.”

It was the habit of Al-Fudail Ibn Iyad that whenever he recited the statement of Allah Almighty: “And We shall try you until We test those among you who strive their utmost and persevere in patience; and We shall try your reported (mettle)” (Muhammad 31)

﴿ وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ مِنكُمْ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ وَنَبْلُوَا۟ أَخْبَارَكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

He would repeat it while weeping and say: “O our Lord! If You try us, You would expose our defects and tear the screens (therewith we conceal our shortcomings).”

According to Al-Hassan: “It is the intentions that cause the inhabitants of Paradise to abide in Paradise and the denizens of the fire to abide in the fire.”

According to Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him": “The little of deeds

therewith My Countenance is intended is regarded abundant, and the abundance of deeds therewith anything else other than My Countenance is intended is considered little."

According to Bilal Ibn Sa'd: "A servant might say a statement of a faithful believer, thereupon Allah Almighty would leave neither him nor his statement until He regards his deed; and if he does a deed, Allah Almighty would not leave him until He regards his abstention (from evil); and if he abstains (from evil), Allah Almighty would not leave him until He regards his intention: if his intention is good, then, it is more fitting that anything else would be good accordingly."

In sum, intention is the fundament of work. Work lacks intention in order to become good thereby as long as the intention itself is good, even if work is impeded by an impediment.

Explication Of Real Nature Of Intention

It should be known to you that intention is a state in the heart which has two sides: knowledge and work. The knowledge is primary since it is its basis and condition, and work follows it for it is its fruit and offshoot. However, any work, i.e. any optional motion or quietness could be achieved only by three things: knowledge, will and power. Of a surety, man does not will what he knows not, for he should necessarily know what he wills, nor does he work what he wills not, for he should necessarily will what he works. Will is that the heart is moved to do what seems to agree with the purpose immediately or lately. Man is created in a way that allows for some things to agree with him and his purposes, and others to disagree from him and his purposes. Thus, he needs to draw what benefits him and agrees with his purposes, and avert from himself what harms and opposes him. Thus, he lacks to know and perceive the beneficial and harmful things in order to be able to bring the former and flee from the latter.

To be sure, whoever does not see food nor know it could not have it, and whoever does not see fire could not flee from it. Allah Almighty then created guidance and knowledge, and made for them means which are the external and internal senses. Furthermore, if he sees food and knows that it agrees with him, it does not suffice him to have it unless he inclines to, and desires for it. The patient, for example, sees food and knows well that it agrees with his disposition, but he could not get it in view of his lack of inclination to, desire and motive for it.

In sum, Allah Almighty created in man the desire, inclination and will. But even, this also does not suffice him. How many a man who sees food, has desire and motive for it, but fails to get it, in view of his being powerless. Thus, Allah created for him power and moving organs and parts of body in order to be able to get it. An organ does not move but by the power, and the power lies in wait of the stimulating motive, and the motive lies in wait of the knowledge and perception, or assumption and belief, i.e. to think, almost with certainty, that a particular thing agrees with one's disposition. If one thus believes, almost with certainty, that such a thing which agrees with his disposition should be done, the

will is raised which develops inclination; and once the will is raised, the power soon starts to move organs, for power serves will, and will follows the belief and knowledge.

Intention in this meaning is that quality which stands in the middle, i.e. the will which causes one, due to desire and inclination, to do what agrees with the purpose immediately or lately. The first motive is the required purpose, which is the stimulating rationale and the intended desire, and the intent is to be stimulated to do, and the work is the power's being motivated in service of will to move organs. But the power might be motivated by one motive, or by two motives which gather together on one work, and in case it is motivated by two motives, each one of both might be independent and sufficient alone to motivate the power; or both might be inseparable of each other; or one of both might be sufficient and the other only a supporting assistant. From this four divisions spring. Let's give an example for each of them.

The first is to have only a sole motive, such as the case in which a wild animal attacks a man: thus, every time he sees it, he flees from the place where it is. Nothing then disturbs him but to flee from the wild animal. That is because he has seen the wild animal and learnt that it is harmful, which motivated him to flee and have desire for that flight, thereupon the power was raised to do it. In this way, it is said that his intention to leave the place is caused only by the flight from the wild animal. This intention is called the sincere, and work upon it is called sincerity to the motivating purpose. In other words, this purpose is free from partnership of anything else.

The second is to have two motives, each of which is independent and sufficient alone to raise the will. Its example from the sensible observation is that two men co-operate to carry a thing, and each of them has of power as much as is sufficient to enable him alone to carry the same thing were he to carry it alone. Another example relating to our purpose is that one's poor relative begs something from him and he gives it to him because of his poverty and relationship together, knowing that he would have given it to him had it been only for his poverty, regardless of relationship, or had it been only for his relationship, regardless of his poverty. Its sign is that a non-relative poor comes to beg something from him, and a rich relative comes to beg something from him, and he desires to give it to both equally. A third example is of him whom the physician advises to leave food, and then the day of Arafah comes upon him which he fasts knowing that had it not been even the day of Arafah, he would also have left food in compliance with the diet; and had it not been even a diet, he would also have left food in order to observe fast of Arafah. But both motives here gathered together and caused him to do the act, in a way in which the second motive is to accompany the first. Let's call this the accompanying motive.

The third is that both motives are inseparable in the sense that each one alone is not sufficient to raise the will. An example for it from the visible observation is that two weak persons co-operate to carry something which each of them alone could not carry. An example for it to serve our purpose is that

one's rich relative begs a Dirham from him and he does not give it to him, and a poor non-relative begs the same from him and he also does not give it to him. But if his poor relative begs the same from him, he would give it to him. In this way what raises his will here is both motives together, i.e. both relationship and poverty. Another example is of a man who gives in charity publicly in pursuit of reward and people's appreciation in a way that were it only for reward, it would not be sufficient to raise his will to give in charity, and were the beggar a wicked and there is no reward for giving him in charity, only showing off would not be sufficient to raise his will to do it. But were both motives to gather together, they would join in moving the heart to give in charity. Let's call this kind the joining motives.

The fourth is that one of both motives is independent and sufficient to raise the will, whereas the other is not so, but since it is added to the first, it has a supporting and assisting effect. An example for it from the visible observation is that a weak person helps a strong one carry a thing, given that were the strong to be alone, he would be able to carry it, whereas were the weak to be alone, his power would not be sufficient to enable him to do it. An example for it to serve our purpose is that a man has a devotional recital in prayer and a custom in charity, and it happens that at their due time, some people attend, thereupon his act is reduced because of their seeing him, given that he knows that were he to be alone in privacy, he would not weary to do his deed, and that were his deed not to be an act of worship, only showing off would not be sufficient to motivate him to do it. This is something of suspicion with which the intention is stained. Let's call this kind the assistance.

In sum, the second motive might be accompanying, sharing or assisting. We shall explain the ruling pertinent to each of them in our talk about sincerity. Our purpose now is to make a mention of the divisions of intentions, since the deed follows its motive, and is subject to the same ruling. For this reason, it is said that '(the rewards of) deeds depend on intentions' because they are subject to their ruling, and have no ruling in themselves.

Explication Of The Mystery Lying Behind The Statement Of The Messenger Of Allah "Peace Be Upon Him": "The Believer's Intention Is Better Than His Deed"

It should be known to you that it might be thought that the mystery that lies behind such preponderance is the fact that the intention is hidden which none knows but Allah Almighty, and the deed is apparent, and to be sure, what is done in secret is superior to what is done in public. That is true. But that is not intended here, for if one intends to remember Allah Almighty within his heart, or thinks about the public interests of Muslims, then, the general implication of the Hadith requires that the intention of thinking is better than thinking itself. Furthermore, it might be thought that the reason for preponderance is that the intention survives to the end of deed, whereas the deeds do not survive. But this reasoning is weak since this would mean ultimately that the much deed is better than the little deed, and that is not true. To be sure, the intention of the acts of prayer might not survive except for a few moments, whereas the deeds survive;

and the general implication here requires that one's intention should necessarily be better than his deed. In a third interpretation, it might be said that it means that the intention in itself is better than the deed in itself without the intention. That is true, but it is unlikely to be intended here, since deed without intention or what is done heedlessly has no good at all, and intention in itself is good, and the preponderance here implies such as share in good.

The meaning is that every act of worship consists of an intention and a deed. If the intention is good, and the deed is also good, in this way, the intention is more effective and superior in such act of worship to the deed in it. Thus, the Hadith means that the believer's intention in his act of worship is better and more effective than his deed in it. The purpose is that a servant has the freedom of choice in his intention and deed, in which intention is better. That is the significance.

But why intention is preponderant is a thing which none understands but he, who learns the religion's purpose and way and the impacts of the different ways, and then compares the different traditions with each other in order to seem to him in the end what is preponderant in relation to the purpose. For example, whoever says that bread is better than fruits means that it is better in relation to the purpose of sustenance and nourishment, a thing which none knows but he who understands that nourishment has a certain purpose, which is health and survival, in which the various kinds of food have different effects, and learns the effect of each kind and compares effects with each other.

The acts of worship are nourishment of hearts, whose purpose is their cure, survival, safety in the hereafter, and happiness and enjoyment of meeting Allah Almighty. The real purpose then is the pleasure of happiness of meeting Allah Almighty. None would enjoy the meeting of Allah Almighty but he who dies as a lover for, and a Gnostic of Allah Almighty. However, none loves Him but he who has gnosis of Him, and none is affable with his Lord but he who remembers Him more often for a long time. Intimacy is obtained by the continuous remembrance, and gnosis by the permanent meditation, and love necessarily follows gnosis; and the heart would not be devoted to the permanent remembrance and meditation unless it is disengaged from the occupations of this world, and it would not be disengaged from its occupations unless one is cut off its desires, until he turns to be inclined to and desirous for good, disinclined from and disliking for evil.

One inclines to good deeds and acts of worship because he knows well that his happiness in the hereafter is suspended on them. This inclination which depends on knowledge is strengthened by regular work. Thus, by good deeds and acts of worship, the hereafter is intended, and by evils, the world is intended. The inclination of the soul to the hereafter good things and disinclination from the worldly evils disengage it to remembrance and meditation. This is confirmed only by doing the acts of worship regularly and leaving sins by organs for there is an interactive relation between the organs and the heart. The heart is the intended, and the organs are but means to it.

That is the significance of the statement of the Prophet "peace be upon him":

"Verily, in the body there is a piece of flesh (i.e. the heart), and if it is good, all parts of the body would be good accordingly." (This is reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of An-Nu'man Ibn Bashir).

The Prophet "peace be upon him" further said: "O Allah! Make right both the guardian and the subjects." By the guardian he meant the heart. In confirmation of that Allah Almighty said: "It is not their meat nor their blood, that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him." (Al-Hajj 37)

﴿ لَن يَنَالَ ٱللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَٰكِن يَنَالُهُ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ مِنكُمْ ﴾

Piety is the inherent quality of the heart.

From this perspective, the deeds of hearts should be better than the movements of organs. Henceforth, intention should necessarily be better, for it is the heart's inclination to and desire for good. Our purpose of doing deeds with organs is to habituate the heart to will and incline to good and be disengaged from the worldly desires and occupations, and devoted to remembrance and meditation. This then should be necessarily good for it achieves the intended purpose. That is the effect of all acts of worship, whose purpose is to change hearts and alter their qualities apart from organs. Think not, for example, that putting the forehead on the ground in prayer has no purpose other than the confirmation of the quality of humility in the heart. Whoever finds humility in his heart and then is submissive with his organs in imitation of it, would surely confirm it within himself; and similarly, whoever finds smoothness in his heart on an orphan, and then passes his hand over his forehead and kisses him, this smoothness would be confirmed within himself.

That is why deed without intention is useless, for whoever passes his hand over the head of an orphan while he is heedless with his heart, no effect would spring from his organs to his heart in confirmation of smoothness, and similarly, whoever puts his forehead on the ground in prayer while he is engaged in the worldly concerns, no effect would spring from his forehead to his heart in confirmation of humility. Thus, worship without intention is useless and invalid. But if it is intended by means of showing off or honoring anyone else other than Allah Almighty, it would be more evil, for it does not confirm but the opposing quality, i.e. showing off, whose suppression is required, on the exclusion of the very quality whose confirmation is required.

That is the significance of the fact that intention is better than deed. It is within this context that you should understand the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him": "Whoever intends to do a good deed which he does not do, it is written as a good deed for him." That is because the intention of the heart is its inclination to do good, and disinclination from the world and love for desires, and that is the highest good deed, and work only confirms it. What is intended by slaughtering the sacrifice is not the flesh and the blood in so much as the heart's disinclination from the love for this world, as shown in offering it for the Sake of the Countenance of Allah Almighty. This quality occurs when intention is made, even if the work itself is impeded by an impediment: "It is not their meat nor their blood, that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him." (Al-Hajj 37)

﴿ لَن يَنَالَ ٱللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَـٰكِن يَنَالُهُ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ مِنكُمْ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾

Piety is the inherent quality of the heart.

That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" in the holy battle of Tabuk: "Some people in Medina shared us in (the reward of) our Jihad." That is because their hearts were, in their true intention of good, offering property and soul, and desire for martyrdom in order for the word of Allah to be superior, like the hearts of those who set out for Jihad. But they differed from them in bodies for impediments unique to the causes that are external to the heart, which is required only to confirm the qualities of the heart.

It is with those meanings that you should understand all Hadiths and narrations we have mentioned in the virtue of intention. So, compare them with those, in order for their mysteries to be uncovered to you.

Explication Of Deeds That Are Related To Intention

It should be known to you that deeds, be they act, saying, movement, quietness, bringing what is beneficial, averting what is harmful, meditation, remembrance, or so, are ultimately divided into three categories: sins, acts of worship, and permissible deeds.

The first division: sins

They never change by intention, and the ignorant should not understand that, though falsely, from the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him": "Verily, the (rewards of) deeds depend upon intentions", thinking that sin might turn into an act of worship by intention, like him who backbites a man in order to please the heart of another, or feeds an indigent from the property of another, or builds a school, a mosque or any such public building with an unlawful property, putting in mind that his purpose is good. That is out of ignorance, and intention does not change his act from being injustice, transgression and sin. His purpose of good via evil in opposition to Sharia is another evil. If he knows it, then he is an obstinate to the requirements of Sharia, and if he is ignorant of it, he then is disobedient with his ignorance, since the pursuit of knowledge is an obligatory duty binding on every Muslim, and the good deeds should be known for Sharia: then, how should evil be good?

How far! What causes the heart to do so is the hidden desire and internal inclination. If the heart, for example, is inclined to the pursuit of majesty and attraction of the hearts of people, Satan then takes it as a means of dissembling. That is the significance of the statement of Sahl "may Allah have mercy upon him": "No sin therewith Allah Almighty has ever been disobeyed more severe than ignorance." It was said: "O Abu Muhammad! Do you know anything more severe than ignorance?" he said: "Yes, ignorance of ignorance." It is true for ignorance of ignorance closes entirely the door of learning. Whoever thinks that he is a learned, then, how should he learn anything? This then requires that the best deed therewith Allah Almighty has ever been obeyed is knowledge; and the head of knowledge is the knowledge of knowledge, as well as the head of ignorance is the ignorance of ignorance.

Whoever does not know and distinguish the beneficial from the harmful sciences, surely, he would engage in those flowery sciences in which the people are involved, for they are their means to this world. That is the substance of ignorance and the fountainhead of corruption. The point is that whoever intends to do good with a sin out of ignorance, is not excused unless he is still a new convert to Islam, and has no opportunity to learn. Allah Almighty said: " if you realize this not, ask of those who possess the Message." (An-Nahl 43)

﴿ فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "No ignorant should be excused for his ignorance, and it is unlawful for an ignorant not to seek to remove his ignorance, nor for a learnt to conceal his knowledge." (At-Tabarani and Abu Na'im on the authority of Jabir).

The ruler's building schools and places of worship with the unlawful property is similar to the evil scholar's teaching knowledge to the wicked and foolish among people, who are involved in dissoluteness and debauchery, and limit their concern only to disputation with scholars and contest with the weak-minded, attraction of the hearts of people and collection of the ruins and chattels of this world, and unlawful usurpation of the property of rulers, orphans and indigent. If those learn, they would be the travellers on Allah's way. This mischief might spread on earth, and the evil consequence of it returns in the end to the teacher who teaches knowledge to a particular one and he knows well his evil intention. The result is that this teacher dies, and the traces of his evil remain among the people for a long time after him. Blessed be he who, when he dies, all of his sins die with him.

Wonder at the ignorance of such as says: "The (rewards of) deeds depend on intentions, and by so doing, I intended only to spread the religious knowledge: So, if the learner uses it in mischief, then, the sin is due on him and not on me, for I intended only that he should seek its aid to do good." But it is the love for authority and majesty, and pride of knowledge that allure it in his heart, and Satan, by means of his love for authority and majesty, dissembles him. By my life! What does he says to him who gives a sword and a horse to a highway man and then says: "I wanted to give in charity out of generosity and munificence, with the intention that he should fight in the Cause of Allah with the sword and horse, given that to provide fighters with horses and steeds of war is among the greatest acts of worship therewith one comes close to Allah Almighty, and since he used those in cutting the highway on the people, it is he and not I who is sinful."

There is consensus among the juristic scholars that this is unlawful, although generosity is among the characters that is the dearest to Allah Almighty, so much that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Allah Almighty has three hundred moral characters, and if one comes close to Him by any of them, he would enter Paradise, and from among them, generosity is the dearest to Him Almighty." By my life! Why has this generosity then been made unlawful? Why is it incumbent upon him to consider the presumption of the state of this wrongdoer? If it seems to him, from his behaviors, that he uses good in evil, it

becomes binding upon him to seek to deprive him of his weapon and not to provide him with another one. Knowledge is a weapon, therewith Satan and the enemies of Allah Almighty should be fought. But at the same time, the enemies of Allah Almighty might be aided with it, I mean here inclination. Whoever continues to give preference to his inclination over his religion, to his world over his hereafter, and he fails to change it due to his lack of virtue, then, how should he be provided with knowledge to give him access to his desires?

The righteous predecessors continued to inspect the state of such as frequented them to take knowledge from them. If he seemed to indulge in any of the supererogatory deeds, they would disapprove him and not deal with him generously; and if he seemed to be wicked and dissolute, they would discard him and abstain from teaching him, for their knowledge that whoever learns a question upon which he does not act and then skips to another one, seeks nothing but an instrument of evil. All righteous predecessors sought refuge with Allah Almighty from the wicked knowledgeable of the sunnah, and not from the wicked ignorant.

In this context, it is related that one of the companions of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal "may Allah have mercy upon him" used to frequent him for long years and then Ahmad happened to turn away from him, and abstained from talking to him. He continued to ask him about the reason for his changing attitude towards him and he told him not. But in the end he said to him: "I was informed that you had covered with clay the external side of the wall of your house and by so doing, you had taken as little as a finger's breadth, which is the thickness of the clay, from the street of the Muslims. Thus, you are unfitting to transmit knowledge."

In sum, the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him": "The (rewards of) deeds depend upon intentions" is unique to the acts of worship and permissible deeds, apart from sins. Both acts of worship might turn into sins by the intention, and permissible deeds might turn into an act of worship or a sin also by intention, unlike the sin which never turns into an act of worship by intention.

The second division: acts of worship

They are related to intentions in terms of their validity and multiplying virtue. In order to be valid In principle, one should intend thereby only to worship Allah Almighty. If his intention is showing off, it turns into a sin. As for multiplication of virtue, the more there are good intentions, the more the virtue of the act of worship is multiplied, for by a single act of worship one might intend to do many good things, and thus have a reward for each one of them. Each has a good deed, and each good deed is multiplied ten times and more according to the tradition. A typical example is to sit in the mosque: It is an act of worship by which one might intend many good things, until it becomes one of the virtuous deeds of the pious, therewith he attains the ranks of the nearest (to Allah Almighty).

The first is to believe that it is the house of Allah Almighty and such as enters it is a visitor of Allah Almighty, and thus by sitting in it, he intends to visit

his Lord Almighty, in the hope of getting what is promised by the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" when he said: "Whoever sits in the mosque has indeed visited Allah Almighty, and it is incumbent upon the host to deal with his guest generously." (This is reported by Ibn Hibban on the authority of Salman; and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of some companions).

The second is to sit in wait of prayer after prayer, and whoever sits in wait of prayer seems as if he is in prayer. That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "and remain stationed." (Al Imran 200)

﴿وَرَابِطُوا ۝﴾

The third is monasticism, by being in seclusion, i.e. to hold back seeing, hearing and organs from motion and vibration, for sitting in seclusion in the mosque is similar to fasting, and it is a kind of monasticism. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "The monasticism of my people is to sit in seclusion in mosques."

The fourth is to give one's attention to Allah Almighty, stick to remembrance and meditation in the hereafter, and avert what diverts from that by sitting in seclusion in the mosque.

The fifth is to devote oneself to the remembrance or at least hearing to the remembrance of Allah Almighty, or reminding others of Him. In confirmation of that, it is related in a tradition: "Whoever goes early in the morning to the mosque in order to remember Allah or remind others of Him, is like the fighter in the Cause of Allah Almighty." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Umamah; and both Sahihs on the authority of Abu Hurairah, but both with a change in wording).

The sixth is to intend to benefit others with his knowledge, by enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil. To be sure, the mosque could hardly be free from such as errs in his prayer, or does what is unlawful for him, thereupon one might order him to do good and guide him to the teachings of religion, thereby he becomes his partner in the knowledge which he teaches, and his good things are multiplied.

The seventh is to gain a brother in the religion of Allah Almighty, which is an ammunition for him in the hereafter; and the mosque is the nest of the people of religion and lovers for, and in the religion of Allah.

The eighth is to leave sins out of shyness from Allah Almighty, and from doing what violates the sanctity in the house of Allah Almighty. In this respect, Al-Hassan Ibn Ali "Allah be pleased with them" said: "Whoever frequents the mosque regularly, is provided by Allah Almighty with one of the following seven characteristics: a brother to be gained in the religion of Allah Almighty, a mercy descended (from Allah), beneficial knowledge, a word of guidance, disinclination from evil, leaving sins out of fear or shyness (from Allah)."

The third division: permissible deeds

There is no permissible deed but that it might turn, by intention, to one of the best acts of worship therewith one attains the highest ranks. How great is the loss of him who takes no heed of that, and deals with it like an animal. Furthermore, a servant should not regard with slightness any of the passing thoughts or steps or

moments, for he would be questioned about all of this on the Day of Judgement: why has he done this, and what has he intended thereby? This applies to the permissible deed in which no unfavorableness lies.

That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" who said: "Its lawful brings about reckoning, and its unlawful brings about punishment."

It is further narrated on the authority of Mu'adh Ibn Jabal "Allah be pleased with him" from the Prophet "peace be upon him" that he said: "A servant would be asked, on the Day of Judgement, about all things, and even about applying kohl to his eyes, crumbling clay with his fingers and touching the garment of his brother."

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever gets himself perfumed for the sake of Allah Almighty would come on the Day of Judgement with his smell more pleasant than the smell of musk; and whoever gets himself perfumed for the sake of anyone else other than Allah Almighty would come on the Day of Judgement with his odor more stinking than the odor of the carcass." (Abu Al-Walid As-Saffar on the authority of Ishaq Ibn Abu Talhah). Using perfume in itself is permissible, but there should be intention in it.

But you may argue: "What could one intend by perfume and it is one of the fortunes of the self in this world? And how should he get himself perfumed for the Sake of Allah Almighty?" in reply to that, it should be known to you that whoever gets perfumed on Friday or at any time else, is imagined to intend to enjoy the pleasures of this world, or to show pride of the great wealth he has so that his fellows might envy him, or to be seen of men in order to attain majesty and have possession of their hearts and is famed among them for his pleasant perfume, or to gain affection therewith in the hearts of women who are foreign to him in case he regards it lawful to look at them lustfully: All of this makes it sinful to get perfumed, for which one's odor would be more stinking than the carcass on the Day of Judgement.

But an exception is made for the first intent, i.e. to enjoy the pleasures of this world, which is not sinful in itself. But he would be questioned about it on the Day of Judgement, and to be sure, whoever is called to account would inevitably be punished. Furthermore, whoever gets a permissible thing in this world would not be punished for it in the hereafter, but at the same time, his bliss in the hereafter would decrease as much as is in proportion to what he gets in this world. What a loss it is to hurry to get what is perishable on the expense of what is never-ending.

As for the good intention, it is that he should intend thereby to follow the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" on Friday, to intend to honor the mosque and respect the house of Allah, which he should not enter as a visitor of Allah Almighty unless he is pleasant-smelling, to exude good odor among his brothers when they sit beside him in the mosque, to avert the hateful odor from himself which causes harm to the sitters by his side, to close the door of backbiting against the backbiters when they like to backbite him because of

bad smell, thereby disobey Allah Almighty. However, whoever is exposed to backbiting and he is able to avoid it, let him do it, otherwise, he would be a partner in that sin. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " Revile not you those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance." (Al-An'am 108)

﴿ وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ﴾

He also should intend thereby to treat his brain so that he would become more prudent and intelligent, and it would become easier upon himself to perceive the tasks of his religion by meditation. In this respect, Ash-Shafi'i "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "He, whose smell is pleasant, becomes more mindful."

All of those good intentions are present when good prevails over the heart. But if it is only the pleasures of this world which prevail over his heart, nothing of those good intentions would be present in his mind, and even if they are mentioned to him, his heart would not be moved for them. However, the permissible deeds are numerous and intentions in them could not be calculated. So, measure on that anything else.

For this reason, one of the righteous predecessors said: "I like to have intention in anything I do, even whenever I eat, drink, sleep and enter the privy." All of this is intended to bring one closer to Allah Almighty, for all that is intended to sustain the body and disengage the heart from the burdens of the body helps one do the religious assignments enjoined upon him. Whoever intends by eating to devote himself to worship, by having sexual relation with his wife to safeguard his religion, please his wife and beget righteous offspring to worship Allah Almighty after him therewith the nation of Muhammad "peace be upon him" increases in number, he then is obedient in his eating and sexual intercourse, which constitute the greater part of the self fortunes in this world; and it is not possible to intend good thereby particularly for him who is mainly concerned with the hereafter.

For this reason, one should make good his intention even if he loses property, and say: "Let it be in the Cause of Allah." If he receives the news of being backbitten by others, he should soothe his heart with the argument that his sins and evil deeds would be born by the backbiter, whereas the backbiter's good deeds would be transferred to his account. Let him have such intention by keeping silent from response to backbiting.

In confirmation of that, it is related in a particular tradition: "Indeed, a servant would be called to account thereupon his deeds would be fruitless for their being stained with evil until fire becomes assured to him. Then, righteous deeds would be added to his account so much that Paradise becomes assured to him. On that he wonders and says: "O Lord! I have never done those righteous deeds." It would be said to him: "Those are the deeds of such as backbit, harmed and wronged you."" (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami in his Firdaws on the authority of Shith Ibn Sa'd).

It is narrated in another tradition: "A servant would come to the Day of Judgement with good deeds as much as mountains, and were they to be pure for

him, surely, he would enter Paradise. But even, he would come and he had wronged so and so, insulted so and so, and beat so and so, thereupon each of them would take his right from his good deeds until no single good deed remains with him. The angels would say: "His good deeds have been consumed, and there are still claimants of rights." Allah Almighty would say: "Then, draw upon him of their sins, and prepare a deed for him to the fire.""

In sum, beware and beware of looking down upon any of your movements, without avoiding its deceptive and evil nature, which you would not be able to refute on the Day of questioning and reckoning, for Allah Almighty watches over you, and sees all that you do: " Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it)." (Qaf 18)

﴿ مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴾

According to a righteous predecessor: "I wrote a message and liked to cover it with dust from the wall of the house of my neighbour, but I felt it. Later on I said to myself: "But it is no more than dust. What is its significance?" Then I covered it with dust. Then, a visitant said to me: "The one who regarded with slightness the dust of the wall of the house of his neighbour would know the evil reckoning he would receive in the morrow."

On another occasion, a man prayed in the company of Ath-Thawri and he saw his garment turned upside down, thereupon he wanted to set it right for him, but he withdrew it and did not set it right. When he asked him about the reason he said to him: "I put it on for the Sake of Allah Almighty, and dislike to set it right for anything other than Allah Almighty."

According to Al-Hassan: "A man might hang to another on the Day of Judgement and say to him: "Allah is in between me and you." He would say to him: ""By Allah, I do not recognize you." He would say: "Nay! You took a brick from the wall of my house, a thread from my garment, etc."

So, if you are one of those of determination and intelligence, and not of the deceived, then, consider yourself, and account it tightly, before it would be tightened on you, and watch your states minutely, and neither move nor keep quiet unless you know well what you intend by your motion or quietness, and what you get thereby from this world, and what you would lose from the hereafter, and by which thing the world becomes preponderant to the hereafter. If you know well that there is no motive other than religion, then, put your determination and what has occurred to your mind to practice, by permission of Allah Almighty, otherwise, abstain from doing it. On the other hand, watch your heart in your abstention, for not to do a thing is regarded an act in itself, which also needs a true intention. The motive should not be a hidden inclination which none knows. Furthermore, do not be deceived by the apparent matters and famous good things, and make sense to deep mysteries and secrets, that you would come out of the sphere of those who are deceived.

In this respect, it is narrated that Zakariyya "peace be upon him" was building a wall for charge in favor of some people who gave him a loaf since he did not eat but from the earnings of his labor. Then, some people came to visit him and he did not invite them to the meal until he finished from it. They wondered

because he was recognized for his generosity and asceticism , and they thought that good lies in one's asking others to share food with him. In justification, he said to them: "I am working for a people for charge, and they have given me this loaf in order to sustain my body and become able to persist in their work. If you eat with me, it would suffice neither you nor me, and I would further weary to complete their work." As such the insightful should look at the internal matters with the light of Allah Almighty. To weary to complete their work is shortage in an obligatory duty, whereas not to invite them to share the meal with him is shortage in a supererogatory deed, and of a surety, obligatory deeds should be given priority to supererogatory deeds.

On another occasion, a man said: I entered upon Sufyan and he was eating, and he did not talk to me until he finished and licked his fingers. Then he said to me: "Had I not taken it by loan, I would have liked you to eat of it."

Sufyan said once again: "Whoever invites another to share food with him and he has no desire for eating, then, in case he answers his invitation and eats, he would bear two sins, and in case he abstains, he would bear only one sin." One of the two sins is hypocrisy, and the other is to expose his brother to what he dislikes were he to know it.

As such one should inspect his intention in all of his deeds, and neither do nor abstain but with intention. But if the intention is not present, he should stop, for intention is beyond choice.

Explication Of The Fact That Intention Is Beyond Choice

It should be known to you that the ignorant might hear what we have mentioned as regards making good or multiplying one's intention, along with the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him": "The (rewards of) deeds depend on intentions", thereupon he says in himself whenever he teaches, eats, or even trades: "I intend to eat, teach or trade for the Sake of Allah", thinking it to be a real intention. How far! That is no more than a self-talk and movement from one passing thought to another, and the real intention is far from all of that.

The real intention is the self being raised, devotion and inclination to what seems to it to agree with its purpose immediately or lately. If there is no inclination in principle, it could not be invented or acquired only by will. Nay! It is just like the statement of the satiated: "I intend to have appetite for and inclination to food", or the statement of the disengaged: "I intend to love, honor and be attached to in love so and so with my heart". That is quite impossible. There is no way to acquire the heart's devotion and inclination to a particular thing, unless its means and causes are acquired first, which one might or might not be able to do. The self is raised to do an act in response to the motivating purpose which agrees with and befits it. Unless man thinks that his purpose is a cause of a particular act, he would not turn to it by intention. But one might not be able to have such a belief every moment. If he thinks so, the heart would turn to it in case it is disengaged, and not diverted from it by another purpose of stronger effect, and this is not possible at any time.

Motives and diverters have many causes, which differ by the difference of

persons, states and deeds. If the desire for marriage is prevailing, and one does not believe in a right purpose from children in world and religion, by no means would he have sexual relation with the intention to beget children, and his intention would not go beyond the fulfillment of desire, since intention is to respond to the motive, and here there is no motive other than the sexual desire. Similarly, if it does not prevail over his heart to establish the sunnah of marriage in imitation of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" whose virtue is great, in no way would he intend, by marriage, to follow the Prophetic sunnah, other than his saying so only with his tongue and heart, and that is a self-talk and not intention at all.

For this reason, a group of righteous predecessors abstained from a set of acts of worship under pretext that intentions concerning them were not present in their mind. They said: "No intention in that is present in our minds in order for us to do it."

It is said that Ibn Sirin did not offer funeral prayer on Al-Hassan Al-Basri "may Allah have mercy upon him" and said: "No intention is present in my mind to do so."

On another occasion, a man who was combing his head called his wife and asked her to bring the comb, and she said: "Should I also bring the mirror?" he kept silent for a while after which he answered in the affirmative. When he was asked about that he said: "I had intention to get the comb, and not the mirror and so I stopped for a while until intention was prepared by Allah Almighty."

It is narrated that Hammad Ibn Sulaiman died and he was one of the learned scholars of Kufah, and it was said to Ath-Thawri: "Would you not attend his funeral procession?" he said: "Had I had the intention to do so, surely, I would have done it."

Whenever anyone of those was asked to do any righteous deed he would say: "If Allah Almighty bestows upon me intention, I would do it."

Tawus "may Allah have mercy upon him" did not relate anything to others without intention, and it happened that he was asked to relate, and he did not do, and it happened that he related without being asked to do so. When he was asked about the reason for that he said: "Do you like me to relate to you without intention? If the intention is present in my mind to do, I would do it."

It is related that when Dawud Ibn Al-Muhabbar composed the book of Al-'Aql, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal "may Allah have mercy upon him" came to him and asked him for it, and he gave it to him. When he caught a glimpse of some pages from it he returned it to him. He asked him: "What is wrong with it?" he said: "It has many weak chains of transmission." Dawud said to him: "I have not directed it depending on the chains of transmission, but rather look at it with the eye of news, for I looked at it with the eye of work, thereupon I have benefitted with it." Ahmad said to him: "Then, return it to me in order to look at it with the same eye with which you had looked at it." He took it and it remained with him for a long time after which he said to him: "May Allah reward you, for I have really benefitted with it."

It was said to Tawus "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Invoke good upon

us." he said: "No, until I find intention within my self to do it."

A man said: "I am in pursuit of an intention to visit a patient to inquire about his health for a month, and it has not been present yet."

According to Isa Ibn Kathir: I was walking in the company of Maimun Ibn Muhran when he reached the door of his house, thereupon I turned away. His son said to him: "Would you not invite him to have dinner with us?" he said: "I have no intention to do so."

That is because intention always follows vision, and once vision changes, intention changes accordingly. In their sight, they should not do a deed without intention, due to their awareness of the fact that intention constitutes the spirit of the deed, and the deed without true intention is but showing off and ostentation, which is a cause of displeasure and not of nearness (to Allah). They also learnt that the intention is not to say with one's tongue 'I intend to do such and such', but it is that the heart is raised to do a thing, by virtue of Allah Almighty. It sometimes might be available and sometimes not available.

It is true that if one, over whose heart religion prevails, the intention to do good things more often would be present in his mind, for his heart is entirely inclined to good in principle, and thus is raised to do the deeds and acts relating to it. But if one over whose heart the worldly things prevail, and he inclines to it, such intention would not be available to him. Furthermore, the intention to do the obligatory duties would hardly be available to him, and it is sufficient for him in this issue to remember the fire, and beware of its torment, or the bliss of Paradise and develop within himself the desire for it, perhaps a weak motive might raise him to do and his reward would be in proportion to his desire and intention. As for the intention of worship of Allah Almighty out of honoring and glorifying Him for He is worthy of worship and exaltation, it is not available to the one who desires for the world, although it is the dearest and highest kind of intention, and a very few on the surface of the earth are those who could understand, and even to have it.

However, the people's intentions concerning the acts of worship are of different divisions: one of them does his deed in response to the motive of fear, therewith he safeguards himself from the fire; and one of them does his deed in response to the motive of hope, as he desires for Paradise. This, though being less in rank than the act of worship in exaltation and glorification of Allah Almighty for the Sake and Glory of Himself, and not for anything else, belongs to the true intentions, for it is an inclination to what is promised in the hereafter, and similar to what is familiar in this world. The desires of the abdomen and genitals constitute the greater part of motives, and Paradise is the place to fulfill them. So, whoever works for the sake of Paradise works indeed for his abdomen and genitals, like the evil hireling, and his degree is that of a mindless, and he would attain it by virtue of his deed, for the majority of the inhabitants of Paradise belong to the mindless.

But the worship given by the mindful does not go beyond the remembrance of Allah Almighty and meditation of His beauty and glory in a way that all deeds are but affirmatives and accessories to that. The rank of those are too high to

allow them to turn to food and sexual relation in Paradise, which they did not intend at all: but it is those who invoke their Lord every morning and evening, seeking only His Countenance. Since the people's reward is in proportion to their intentions, no doubt, those would be blessed with looking at His Bounteous Countenance, and mock at such as turn to the faces of the houris of lustrious eyes, just as those who are blessed with looking at the faces of the houris of lustrious eyes ridicule those who enjoy of looking at the faces of the women who are created from clay, although the discrepancy between the Divine beauty and glory on the one hand, and the beauty of the houris of lustrious eyes is greater than the discrepancy between the beauty of the houris of lustrious eyes and the beauty of women who are created from clay.

It is narrated that Ahmad Ibn Khadrawaih saw his Lord in a dream and He Almighty said to him: "All the people ask Me for Paradise except for Abu Yazid, who demands Me Alone." Abu Yazid saw his Lord in a dream and he asked him: "O Lord! What is the way to You?" He said: "Abscond yourself and come to Me." Ash-Shibli was seen in a dream after his death and he was asked: "What has Allah Almighty done with you?" he said: "He did not ask me for a proof for any claim other than one thing I have said. One day I said: "Which loss is greater than the loss of Paradise?" on that He Almighty said to me: "Which loss is greater than the loss of meeting Me?"

The point is that those intentions are of different degrees, and he, over whose heart any of them prevails, might not find it easy upon himself to move to another. The knowledge of those brings about acts and deeds which are not rejected by the juristic scholars. Let us say that he who have the intention to do a permissible thing, and have no intention to do a superior deed, then, to do the permissible is preferable, and to do the superior deed becomes shortage in him, for the (rewards of) deeds depend on intentions. It is like forgiveness, which is better than retribution for injustice. But even, one might have intention to exact retribution and have no intention to forgive: in which case, the former is better. Another example is to have intention to eat, drink and sleep, in order to comfort himself and become able to do the acts of worship in the future. But at the same time, he has no intention to observe fast or offer supererogatory prayer: in which case, eating, drinking and sleeping are better. Moreover, if one gets exhausted and tired of worship for he has been regular on it for a long time, and knows that were he to entertain himself for an hour he would refresh himself and become able to resume worship, then, entertainment is better for him. According to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him': "I comfort myself with something of entertainment in order that it would be an aid for me on worship." According to Ali "Allah be pleased with him": "Soothe the hearts (with something of entertainment), for if they are forced (on worship), they would become blind."

Such subtleties are perceived only by the intelligent among the scholars. Do you not see how the experienced physician treats with the flesh the one who suffers from a high temperature, which the novice in medicine might relegate? Similarly, the experienced in fighting might flee from his enemy by way of trickery simply to draw him to a narrow place where he could attack and kill him

easily. Likewise, following the path to Allah Almighty is a journey of fighting with Satan and treatment of the heart, during which the insightful stops on subtleties of tricks which the weak relegates.

CHAPTER TWO

SINCERITY ITS VIRTUE, REAL NATURE AND DEGREES

Virtue Of Sincerity

From among the Holy Qur'anic Verses, a mention may be made of the statement of Allah Almighty: " And they have been commanded no more than to worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion, being True (in faith)." (Al-Bayyinah 5) and: " Surely, to Allah sincere devotion is due." (Az-Zumar 3)

﴿ أَلَا لِلَّهِ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْخَالِصُ ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

And: "Except for those who repent, mend (their life), hold fast to Allah, and purify their religion as in Allah's sight; if so they will be (numbered) with the Believers." (An-Nisa 146)

﴿ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ وَأَصْلَحُوا۟ وَٱعْتَصَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ ﴾

And: "Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner." (Al-Kahf 110)

﴿ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ لِقَآءَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَـٰلِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَحَدًۢا ﴿١١٠﴾ ﴾

It was revealed in connection with those who do righteous deeds for the Sake of Allah, and like to be praised for it.

From among the Prophetic narrations, a mention may be made of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him": "There are three qualities which bring about no envy in the heart of a Muslim man: one of them is to be sincere in deed to Allah Almighty." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of An-Nu'man Ibn Bashir).

It is narrated on the authority of Mus'ab Ibn Sa'd from his father (Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas) "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: My father thought he had superiority over those who were of a lower social class, from among the companions of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" thereupon the Prophet "peace be upon him" said to him: "Verily, Allah Almighty helps this nation by virtue of the weak among its members and their invocations and sincerity (in their religion to Allah)." (An-Nasa'i; and Al-Bukhari but with a different wording).

It is further narrated on the authority of Al-Hassan from the Prophet "peace be upon him" that he said: Allah Almighty says: "Sincerity is one of My mysteries which I place in the heart of whomever I love from among My servants."

It is narrated on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: It should not concern you that your deed is little, but what should concern you is to be accepted (by Allah Almighty), for the Prophet "peace be upon him" said to Mu'adh: "Be sincere in your deed, perchance the little thereof would be sufficient for you." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Mu'adh).

It is further narrated that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "No servant is sincere in his deed to Allah Almighty for forty days but that the fountainheads of wisdom spring from his heart on his tongue." (Ibn Adi on the authority of Abu Musa).

It is narrated that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Three persons would be the first to be questioned on the Day of Judgement: the first is a man whom Allah has given knowledge, thereupon Allah Almighty would ask him: "What have you done with what you had of knowledge?" He would say: "O Lord! I used to stand (in prayer and remembrance) for part of the hours of the night and the sides of the day." Allah then would say: "You have told a lie." The angels also would say: "You have told a lie. But you liked that people should say about you: 'So and so is a learned', and it was said." The second is a man whom Allah has given property, thereupon He would say to him: "I have bestowed favors on you: what have you done with that?" he would say: "O Lord! I used to give it in charity for part of the hours of the night and the sides of the day." Allah Almighty would say: "You have told a lie." The angels also would say: "You have told a lie. But you liked that people should say about you: 'So and so is generous', and it was said." The third is a man who was killed in the Cause of Allah, to whom Allah Almighty would say: "What have you done?" he would say: "O Lord! I was commanded to fight in Your Cause, and I fought until I was killed." On that Allah would say: "You have told a lie." The angels also would say: "You have told a lie. But you liked that people should say about you: 'So and so is brave', and it was said."

Then, Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" said: Then, the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" struck his thigh and said: "O Abu Hurairah! Those would be the first persons with whom the fire of Hell would be kindled to fierce heat on the Day of Judgement." Then, the narrator of that Hadith entered upon Mu'awiyah and narrated it to him, thereupon he went on weeping until he was about to die. Then, he commented: Allah has told the truth when He said: " Those who desire the life of the Present and its glitter, to them We shall pay (the price of) their deeds therein, without diminution. They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire: vain are the designs they frame therein, and of no effect are the deeds that they do!" (Hud 15:16)

﴿ مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ ۝ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي ٱلْأٓخِرَةِ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارُ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُواْ فِيهَا وَبَٰطِلٌ مَّا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ ۝ ﴾

It is narrated in an Israeli tale that a worshipper worshipped Allah Almighty for a long time when some people came to him and said: "There are some who worship a tree other than Allah Almighty." He grew angry for that matter and carried his mattock on his shoulder and went with the intention to cut off the tree. But on the way, Iblis received him in the form of an old man and said to him: "What do you want to do, may Allah have mercy upon you?" he said: "I want to cut off this tree." He said to him: "What do you have to do with it? Have you left your worship and engagement in your own affairs and devoted yourself to something else?" he said: "This is a part of my worship." He said to him:

"Then, I would not let you cut it." He fought him and the worshipper took hold of him and threw him on the ground and sat on his breast.

Iblis said to him: "Release me in order to talk to you." He stood from over him, and Iblis said to him: "O so and so! Allah has cancelled out that duty from you and has not enjoined it upon you. Since you yourself do not worship it, then, what do you have to do with the others? Allah Almighty has Prophets along the different sides of the earth, and had He willed, He would have sent anyone of them to its people and ordered them to cut it." But the worshipper persisted in his intention and Iblis fought him and the worshipper overpowered him, and threw him on the ground and sat on his breast. When Iblis failed to prevent him he said to him: "Do you desire for something to decide between you and me? It is indeed better for, and more beneficial to you." He asked him: "What is that?" He said: "Release me to tell you about it."

He released him and he said: "You are a poor man who has nothing: But you are dependent on the people who maintain you, and perhaps you prefer to confer favors on your brothers, console your neighbours and be satiated and independent from the people." He answered in the affirmative. He said to him: "Then, retract from that and I promise to deposit by the side of your head two Dinars every night and in the morning you take them and spend them on yourself and your dependents, and give in charity to your brothers: This would be more beneficial to you and to the Muslims than to cut off that tree in place of which another one might be planted, and in naught would cutting it harm them, nor would it benefit your believing brothers."

The worshipper thought about what he had said and said: "The old man has told the truth. I am not a Prophet upon whom it is binding to cut off that tree, nor have I been commanded by Allah to cut it so that I would be disobedient by leaving it. What he has mentioned to me is more beneficial." He promised to fulfill to him what he had vowed, and the worshipper returned to his worshipping place and spent the night there. In the morning, he found two Dinars by the side of his head, which he took. The same occurred on the next and third days. But on the fourth day when it was morning, he found nothing. He grew angry and carried his mattock on his shoulder and on the way Iblis received him in the form of an old man and asked him: "Where are you going?" he said: "To cut off that tree." He said to him: "You have told a lie. You are not capable of doing that, and you have no way to do so."

When the worshipper took hold of him in order to do with him the same he did in the first time, he said to him: "How far!" Iblis then caught hold of him and knocked him down and behold! He became like the bird between his legs. Iblis then sat on his breast and said to him: "You should desist from that otherwise I would slay you." The worshipper found that he had no power to resist him, thereupon he asked him: "O so and so! You have overpowered me. So, release me and tell me how I had overpowered you at first and now you have overpowered me." He said to him: "In the first time, you grew angry for the Sake of Allah, and your intention was for the hereafter, and for this reason, Allah Almighty subjugated me to you. But this time, you grew angry for your sake and

for the sake of this world, thereupon I overpowered you."

Those tales are related in confirmation of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Except Your servants among them, sincere and purified (by Your grace)." (Al-Hijr 40)

﴿ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ۝ ﴾

A servant could get rid of Satan only by being sincere in his worship to Allah Almighty.

For this reason, it is related that Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi "may Allah have mercy upon him" used to beat himself and say: "O my self! Be sincere (in your worship to Allah), perchance you would get rid (of Satan)."

According to Ya'qub the Blind: "The sincere one is he who conceals his good deeds in the same way as he conceals his misdeeds."

According to Sulaiman: "Blessed be he who takes even a single step that is held valid thereby he intends nothing other than Allah Almighty."

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" wrote the following message to Abu Musa "Allah be pleased with him": "Whoever makes sincere his intention, Allah suffices him what is between him and the people."

One of the allies of Allah wrote to one of his brothers: "Be sincere in your deeds, the little thereof would be sufficient for you."

According to Ayyub As-Sikhtiyani: "To make sincere one's work is more difficult upon the workers than all deeds they do."

According to Mutarrif: "Whoever purifies (his intention to Allah), (the reward) would be purified for him; and whoever mixes (his intention to Allah with anything else), (the reward) would be mixed (with punishment) for him."

According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: "Sincerity purifies the deed from defects in the same way as the milk is purified from excrement and blood."

It is narrated that there was a man who used to set out in the uniform of women and attend everywhere women assembled. One day, he happened to attend a gathering of women. Then, a pearl was stolen and they cried to close the door in order to inspect for it. They inspected one by one until it was the turn of the man and there was a woman with him. He invoked Allah sincerely: "If I was saved from this scandal, I would never return to do the like of that once again." Then, the pearl was found with that woman. They cried: "Then, release the remaining free woman (i.e. the man who was putting on the uniform of women), for we have found the pearl."

According to Sari As-Saqati "may Allah have mercy upon him" : "To offer a two-rak'ah prayer in seclusion with sincerity is better than to write seventy or even seven hundred Hadiths in order to be high."

According to another man: "In sincerity for even as little as an hour lies salvation (from punishment) forever, but sincerity could rarely be observed."

It is said: "Knowledge is seeds, and deed is to sow such seeds, whose water is sincerity."

According to a wise man: "If Allah Almighty is displeased with a man, He gives him three, and withholds from him three: He gives him the company of the righteous people, and withholds from him to be accepted by them; gives him the

righteous deeds, and withholds from him to be sincere in them; and gives him wisdom and withholds from him to be truthful in it."

According to As-Susi: "What Allah requires from the deeds of the people is to be sincere in them."

According to Al-Junaid: "Allah Almighty has servants who were endued with reason: when they were endued with reason, they did deeds, and when they did deeds, they were sincere in them, and then sincerity invited them to all doors of righteousness."

According to Muhammad Ibn Sa'id Al-Marwazi: "The whole matter goes back to two principles: An act from Him with you , and an act from you to Him. You then should accept what He does with you, and be sincere in what you do for Him, thereupon you would be happy by both and attain felicity in both abodes."

Explication Of Real Nature Of Sincerity

It should be known to you that everything is imagined to be mixed with another. If it is purified from all things, it is called pure. In this sense, to do a deed that is pure and not stained with anything else is called sincerity. Allah Almighty said: " From what is within their bodies, between excretions and blood, We produce, for your drink, milk, pure and agreeable to those who drink it." (An-Nahl 66)

﴿ مِنۢ بَيۡنِ فَرۡثٖ وَدَمٖ لَّبَنًا خَالِصٗا سَآئِغٗا لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ ﴾

In order for milk to be pure, it should not be contaminated with blood or excretion or anything else.

Sincerity or purity (of faith) then is opposed to ascription of partners. Whoever is not sincere (or pure in his faith) is an associator of partners. But ascription of partners is of several degrees: sincerity in observing the oneness of Allah, i.e. monotheism is opposed to ascription of partners to Allah Almighty (in worship), i.e. polytheism. On the other hand, polytheism might be hidden and apparent. The same is true of sincerity. Both sincerity and its opposite occur upon the heart, which is their place. That lies principally in intentions and purposes.

We have already mentioned the real nature of intention which goes back to response to motives. If the motive is one, the deed resulting from it is called sincerity to what is intended. Whoever gives in charity with the intention of showing off is sincere to his intention of showing off; and whoever does so with the intention to come close to Allah Almighty also is sincere to his intention of closeness to Allah. But it is customary to dedicate the name of sincerity to the sole intention of coming close to Allah Almighty, as being purified from all stains. It is like atheism, which means inclination: But it is dedicated only to deviation from the truth.

Let's now talk about such as is motivated by the intention to come close to Allah Almighty, but this motive is mixed with another one, whether it is showing off or anything else of the worldly fortunes. A typical example is to observe fast in order to benefit with the diet that he gains by fasting, along with the intention

to come close to Allah Almighty; or to emancipate a slave in order to get rid of his sustenance and relieve himself of his bad manners; or to perform Hajj in order to make good his mood, or flee away from an evil or enemy to which he is exposed in his country; or to offer night prayer with the intention to avert slumber from himself, and become able to watch his family; or to learn knowledge in order to become easy on him to get what suffices him of wealth, or to be honored among his clan, or to guard his house and property with the honor and power of knowledge; or to engage in teaching and preaching in order to relieve himself of the distress of silence and enjoy of the pleasure of discourse; or to perform Hajj while walking in order to relieve himself of the charge of hiring a riding mount; or to perform ablution in order to get clean or cold; or to take bath in order to make pleasant his smell; or to relate Hadith in order to be recognized for his high knowledge of Isnad; or to sit in seclusion in the mosque in order to alleviate from himself the rental fee of residence; or to observe fast in order to lighten from himself the burden of cooking food and rather devote himself to his engagements; or to visit a patient to inquire about his health in order to be visited when he falls ill; or to attend a funeral procession in order that the funeral processions of his family would be attended by the people; or to do good in order to be recognized for it, and regarded with the eye of rectitude and reverence: if his intention in all of those deeds is to come close to Allah Almighty, but something of those passing thoughts is mixed with that intention, which makes the deed easier on him, then, his deed would not be pure, and he would not be sincere in it to the Countenance of Allah Almighty, in so much as he would ascribe partners to Him in it. Allah Almighty said: "I am the most independent from all partners."

In sum, if the deed to be done for the Sake of Allah is intended also for any of the worldly fortunes with which the soul is comforted and to which the heart inclines, no matter how little or much it might be, its purity then would be contaminated, and the heart's sincerity in doing it stained. Man is more often involved in his fortunes and dipped in his desires, and anyone of his deeds and acts of worship could hardly be free from any of such transitory fortunes. For this reason, it is said: "Whoever has even a single moment in all his lifetime pure in which he is sincere (in his deed) to the Countenance of Allah Almighty has indeed been saved." That is because sincerity rarely occurs, and it is very difficult for the heart to be purified from all those stains.

The pure deed which one does with sincerity to Allah is that which is motivated only by seeking to obtain closeness to Allah Almighty. If the motives are only those worldly fortunes, then, it would be very difficult upon the person, and this is self-evident. But our subject is such of deeds intended, in principle, to obtain closeness to Allah Almighty, but this intention is stained with any of those worldly fortunes. Those stains might be compatible, sharing, or assisting, as we have already mentioned in intention. Overall, the psychological motive might be equal to, stronger or weaker than the religious motive. Each has its specific ruling as we shall see later.

Sincerity then is to purify the deed from all those stains, be they little or

much, in order to be intended only to get closeness to Allah, in such a way that there is no motive other than it. This is imagined only from him who loves, and is wholeheartedly devoted to Allah Almighty, and mainly concerned with the hereafter, which leaves in his heart no place for the love for this world, to the extent that he even does not like eating or drinking: but he desires it only in the same way as he desires to answer the call of nature, as being necessary by predisposition. In other words, he has no desire for food because it is food in so much as because it makes him strong enough to worship Allah Almighty, hoping to be sufficed the evil of hunger in order not to need eating at all. In this way, there remains in His heart no place for the unnecessary fortunes of this world, and what is necessary is required by him just because it is essential to maintain his religion. He is concerned only with Allah Almighty.

If such a person does any deed like eating, drinking or answering the call of nature, he would be sincere in his deed and his intention true in his movement and stillness. For example, if he sleeps in order to become strong enough to resume his worship, his sleep would be regarded an act of worship, and he would attain the degree of the sincere in it. But whoever is not so, then, the door of sincerity in worship is closed against him. As well as he, over whose heart the love for Allah Almighty and the hereafter prevails, would be sincere in his deeds, similarly, he, over whose heart the love for the world, majesty and supremacy, i.e. the love for anything other than Allah Almighty prevails, would lose that sincerity in his acts of worship. Thus, the treatment of sincerity is to break the self fortunes and severe from worldly covets and rather dedicate oneself to the hereafter until it prevails over the heart. In this way, sincerity becomes easy.

Many are the deeds in which one is troubled, thinking he does them with sincerity to the Countenance of Allah Almighty, and he is deceived in that assumption, simply because he does not see the evil that stains them. In this respect, it is narrated from a man that he said: "I compensated the prayers of thirty years which I had offered in the mosque in the first row. That is because one day I delayed for a legal excuse, and offered the prayer in the second row. But I felt shy of people for they saw me praying in the second, and they used to see me praying in the first row. Then, I came to know that people's vision of me in the first row was the cause of my pleasure and the comfort of my heart, whereas I felt not."

This is an abstruse subtlety from which the deeds could hardly be safe, and few are those who make sense to it, except such as helped and guided by Allah Almighty. But the heedless see all their good deeds in this world misdeeds in the hereafter, and it is those who are intended by the statement of Allah Almighty: " But something will confront them from Allah, which they could never have counted upon! For the evils of their Deeds will confront them, and they will be (completely) encircled by that which they used to mock at!" (Az-Zumar 47:48)

﴿ وَبَدَا لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ يَحْتَسِبُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾

And: "Say: "Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds? "Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life. While they thought that they were acquiring good by their works?" (Al-Kahf 103-104)

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَٰلًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾

From among the people, the scholars and learned are exposed most to this affliction, because what motivates the majority of them to spread knowledge, for the most part, is the pleasure of possessing the hearts of people, and having a great number of followers, and cheerfulness of praise and gratitude they receive, and Satan always dissembles them by saying to them: "Your purpose is to spread the religion of Allah Almighty and defend the Sharia enjoined by the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him"." Thus, the preacher more often reminds the people of the favor of advising them and admonishing the rulers, and rejoices of the people's accepting his speech, and turning to him, while he claims that he rejoices of his supporting the religion that is made easy for him, given that were anyone of his fellows better than him to appear, and were the people to turn to him and leave that preacher, this would aggrieve him so much. Had his motive been only the religion, he would have thanked Allah Almighty for He has sufficed him this task by anyone other than him.

But even, Satan does not leave him, and rather says to him, by way of dissembling: "Your grief is not because of the people's turning from you in so much as because of the reward's being cut from you, for had they been admonished by your speech and advice, surely, you would have received reward for that." Therefore, the poor man does not know that his submission to the truth and relieving himself of the matter is better, more rewardable and more beneficial for him in the hereafter.

By my life, were Umar "Allah be pleased with him" to be aggrieved for Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" undertook the imamate of prayer, would his grief be praiseworthy or blameworthy? However, no religious man has doubt that had he been aggrieved, his grief would have been blameworthy. But his submission to the truth, and giving the matter to him who was more fitting for it than him was more beneficial for him in religion than to take care of the affairs of people, given its great reward. Moreover, Umar "Allah be pleased with him" rejoiced for somebody more fitting than him undertook the matter. What is the matter with the learned and scholars that they do not rejoice of the like of this?

The knowledge of real nature of sincerity is a deep ocean in which all the people sink, barring the extraordinarily preeminent and distinguished, who is excepted in the statement of Allah Almighty: "Except Your servants among them, sincere and purified (by Your grace)." (Al-Hijr 40)

﴿ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

So, let the servant be vigilant in watching those subtleties, otherwise, he would join the devotees of Satan while he feels not.

Explication Of Statements Of Righteous In Sincerity

According to As-Susi: "Sincerity is not to see sincerity (from yourself), for whoever sees sincerity from himself, then, his sincerity needs sincerity." His

statement refers to the necessity to purify the deed from conceit because of it, for to turn to and regard sincerity with importance is a kind of conceit, and conceit itself is one of evils. The pure deed which one does with sincerity is that which is purified from all evils. But even, that is only one evil.

According to Sahl "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Sincerity is that the servant's movement and stillness are only for Allah Almighty and not for anything or anyone else." However, this statement is comprehensive. Similar to it is the statement of Ibrahim Ibn Adham: "Sincerity is that the intention should be true with Allah Almighty." On another occasion, it was said to Sahl: "Which thing is more difficult on the soul?" he said: "Sincerity, for it has no portion from it."

According to Ruwaim: "Sincerity in deed is that its doer does not want recompense for it in both abodes (i.e. the world and the hereafter)." This statement refers to the fact that the fortunes of the soul are but transitory and deferred evils. The worshipper whose purpose is to be blessed in the pleasures and delights of Paradise is also defective, for the deed should not be intended but for the Countenance of Allah Almighty, in reference to the sincerity of the sincere affirmers of truth. That is indeed the absolute sincerity. Nevertheless, whoever does deeds in the hope of Paradise and for fear of the fire is also sincere but simply in relation with the transitory fortunes, since he pursues only the fortunes of both abdomen and genitals. Therefore, what should be really pursued is the Countenance of Allah Almighty. He further said: "None moves but for a certain fortune, and freedom from fortunes is a Divine quality, and whoever claims it is a disbeliever."

Abu Bakr Al-Baqillani judged as disbeliever the one who claims freedom from the fortunes, under pretext that such freedom is characteristic only of the God. What he has mentioned is indeed true. But the people intended by such freedom is purification from what they call fortunes, which stand for the desires that are described in Paradise. But to take pleasure in gnosis, private talk and looking at the Countenance of Allah Almighty is the sole portion of those, and they do not regard it a fortune. Were all pleasures and delights of Paradise to be offered to those in recompense for the pleasure of obedience, private talk and prostration to Allah Almighty, of a surety they would regard them with slightness, and rather look down upon them all. Their movement then is for a certain fortune, and their obedience for a certain fortune, but this fortune is their worshipped god alone and not anything else.

According to Abu Uthman: "Sincerity is to forget the vision of all the creation with the permanent looking at the Creator." This is, however, a reference to the evil of showing off only. For this reason, one of them said: "Sincerity in the deed is that no Satan should see it lest he would corrupt it, nor an angel lest he would write it." That is a reference to the concealment only. In confirmation of that, it is said: "The sincere among deeds is that which is hidden from the people, and purified from all engagements and relations." That comprehends all intended purposes. According to Al-Muhasibi: "Sincerity is to banish the people in treatment with the Lord."" This refers only to the negation

of showing off. It is similar to the statement of Al-Khawas: "Whoever drinks from the cup of authority has indeed deviated from the sincerity of worship."

The disciples asked Jesus "peace be upon him": "What is the pure among the deeds?" he said: "It is that which one does with sincerity to Allah Almighty and dislikes that none else should praise him for it." This also encourages to leave showing off. According to Al-Junaid: "Sincerity is to purify the deed from all stains of impurities." According to Al-Fudail: "To leave the deed for the sake of people is showing off, and to do deeds for the sake of people is polytheism; and sincerity is that Allah delivers you from both."

It is also said: "Sincerity is to forget all fortunes and persist in watching (over yourself)." That is, indeed, the comprehensive account.

However, the statements in this issue are too numerous for this context to permit to mention, and there is no benefit to relate many transmitted texts after the reality is uncovered. The satisfactory account is that of the master of the foremost and the last of people "peace be upon him" when he was asked about sincerity thereupon he said: "It is to say: 'My Lord is Allah', and then to stand straight as you have been commanded." (Ibn Majah and Muslim on the authority of Sufyan Ibn Abdullah Ath-Thaqafi but with change of wording). i.e. not to worship your inclination nor yourself, and not to worship but your Lord Alone, and stand straight in His worship as you have been commanded. That is a reference to cutting off everything other than Allah Almighty from the field of vision; and this is indeed the sincerity.

Explication Of Degrees Of Impurities And Evils That Stain Sincerity

It should be known to you that the evils and impurities that stains sincerity are hidden in part, apparent in part, weak and clear in part, and strong and hidden in part. But their different degrees concerning appearance and concealment could hardly be understood without an example. The most apparent impurity that distracts sincerity in this respect is showing off. So, let's set forth an example for it.

The first degree: Satan gets the evil into the praying person in his prayer no matter sincere he might be. If some people look at or enter upon him, he tells him to improve his prayer in order for that attendant to look at him with the eye of reverence and rectitude. The result is that his organs become submissive, his limbs calm and his prayer improved; and that is the apparent showing off, which is not hidden even from the novice.

The second degree: according to which the novice understands that evil, and bewares of it, thereupon he does not obey Satan, and rather continues in his prayer as he is with no change. But Satan comes to him while he is doing good and says to him: "You are followed and imitated by others in all of your deeds, and all you do influence the people, and of course, you would receive the reward of their good deeds in which they follow you if you do good, and their sin would be due on you if you do evil. So, make good your deed in front of them, perchance they would follow you in submission and improvement of worship." That kind is more abstruse than the first, which might deceive him who is not deceived by the first. But it is showing off which invalidates sincerity. If he sees

submissiveness and perfect worship good he approves for the person who follows him, why should he not approve the same while being in seclusion? Of course no one could be dearer to him than his own self. That is, indeed, dissembling. Whoever follows him would receive reward for his good worship. But as for him, he would be punished for disclosing from himself what is not his reality.

The third degree is more subtle than this: according to which the servant tests himself and takes heed of the Satan's scheme, putting in mind that his difference in worship in the presence of an assembly from his being in seclusion is indeed showing off, and that sincerity is that his prayer in seclusion should be the same as his prayer in the presence of the assembly. He should feel shy of his Lord Almighty and of himself to be submissive only in the presence of the people more than he is usually when he is in privacy, thereupon he devotes himself to worship in privacy and improves his prayer as much as he approves for himself in the presence of an assembly, for this is also an abstruse and subtle degree of showing off,, for the intention to improve his prayer in privacy is just to make it the same in the presence of an assembly, with no difference then between them. Thus, his devotion in both privacy and assembly is to the creatures and not to the Creator. But sincerity is that it is the same for him to be seen in his prayer by men or animals.

The fourth degree is more abstruse and subtle: according to which it is true that the people look at him in his prayer, but at the same time, Satan fails to tell him to be more submissive in prayer for their sake, for he knows well that he has made sense of that. Therefore, he says to him: "Think about the glory and grandeur of Allah Almighty, before Whom you are standing now, and feel shy that Allah Almighty should look at your heart while it is heedless of Him." The result then is that his heart would be present, and his organs submissive, thinking it to be sincerity, although it is plotting and cunning. Were his submissiveness to be for the Sake of Allah's Glory and Grandeur, surely, this passing thought would occur to his mind while being in privacy, and not in the presence of the assembly.

The sign of safety from this evil is that this passing thought should be familiar to him in privacy as well as in the presence of anyone else, and that the presence of anyone else is not the cause of that passing thought, just as the presence of the animal is not so. As there is still difference within himself between the man's seeing him and the animal's seeing him, he has not become purely sincere, and his internal secret is still contaminated with the hidden polytheism manifested in showing off. That concealed polytheism is more hidden within the heart of mankind than the creeping of the black ant in the dark night on the soft rock.

None is saved from Satan but he whose sight is delicate and he is happy with the protection and guidance of Allah Almighty, otherwise, Satan always sticks to those who devote themselves to the worship of Allah Almighty, and never is heedless of them for a single moment in persistence to turn them to showing off in all they do, even when they apply kohl to their eyes, trim their mustaches, get

perfumed and put on fine clothes on Friday. Those are customs to be done on particular occasions, and one has a hidden fortune in them, for they are visible by others, and with them disposition is affable. Satan then invites him to those and urges him not to leave them at all. In this way, the heart's being stimulated to do them is caused by response to that hidden desire, which turns him from the sphere of sincerity.

Whoever is not safe from all of those evils is not sincere in his worship. For this reason, it is said that a two-rak'ah prayer to be offered by a learned scholar is better than a year of worship from an ignorant. What is intended here is the learned scholar who is insightful of the subtleties of the evils of deeds, in order to be able to purify himself from them. But the ignorant's vision is restricted to the apparent worship, by which he is deceived. In this way the acts of worship are different among the people, and the ways of evils to them is beyond calculation. So, let this amount, no matter little it might be, benefit the reader, and of course, the prudent is satisfied with the little and the foolish is not influenced even by the much. So, it is of no avail to give him more.

Explication Of The Ruling Of The Deed In Connection With Which Sincerity Is Stained; And To What Extent It Is Rewardable

It should be known to you that if the deed is not pure to Allah Almighty, and rather stained with anything of the worldly fortunes, its state is debatable among the scholars, who differ whether it deserves reward, punishment or nothing at all. As for that thereby nothing other than showing off is intended, of a surety, it deserves punishment and displeasure. As for that which is pure thereby the Countenance of Allah Almighty alone is intended, no doubt, it is a cause of reward. But our talk now is about that which is stained .

What seems from the different narrations is that there is no reward for it. But even, there are some traditions that contradict the majority . What we see, and all knowledge is with Allah, is to look at the strength of the motive: If the religious motive is equal in strength to the self motive, then, the deed would neither get reward nor bear punishment. If the motive of showing off is stronger, then, the deed is fruitless and harmful, and leads to punishment. It is true that the punishment for it is less in degree than that of the deed thereby only showing off is intended. If the intention of coming close to Allah is stronger than the other motive, then, it deserves reward as much as is equal to the extent of strength by which the religious motive excels the other.

That is confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: " Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it." (Az-Zalzalah 7-8)

﴿ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ۝ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ۝ ﴾

And: " Allah is never unjust in the least degree: if there is any good (done) He doubles it, and gives from His own presence a great reward." (An-Nisa' 40)

﴿ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝ ﴾

Thus the intention of good should not be caused to suffer along with that of evil.

Let us say, in explanation of this, that deeds effect the heart by confirming their qualities. The motive of showing off is among the destructives, and it is nourished and sustained by doing according to it; Whereas the motive of good is among the saviors, and it is nourished and sustained by doing according to it. If both qualities gather together in the heart, they are opposing. Thus, if one does according to the requirement of showing off, he would strengthen the quality of showing off, and if he does according to the requirement of coming close (to Allah), he would confirm the quality of coming close, and so on. One of them is destructive, and the other is a savior. If both are strengthened equally, they would counterbalance each other. Of course the more one of them is prevailing, the more it is effective on the heart; and in no way could this effect be lost.

If one does what brings him a span closer to Allah and then does what moves him a span farther from Him, then, he would return to his original state, with neither reward nor punishment. If he does what brings him two spans closer to Allah and does what moves him a span farther from Him, then, he would remain only a span close to Allah. In confirmation of that, the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "And do the good deed simply following the misdeed, so that it would erase it." If sheer showing off is erased by sheer sincerity, then, when both gather together in the heart, they would necessarily counterbalance each other. That is attested by the consensus of the nation on the fact that whoever sets out for Hajj and he has goods to traffic therewith, his Hajj would be held valid for which he would receive reward, given that the intention pertaining to it is stained with a worldly fortune.

Regardless of what might be said in this respect, the right is to say that as long as the intention of Hajj is the main motive for setting out on journey, and the traffic no more than an assisting motive, he would get reward for the journey no matter how little or much it might be. In my sight, there is no differentiation, in relation to the fighters in the Cause of Allah, between fighting disbelievers in a place where there is a plenty of war spoils and fighting disbelievers in a place where there is a little or no spoils at all. It is unlikely to say that putting in mind that differentiation makes fruitless the entire reward of their Jihad. It is fair to say that if the main and principal motive is to make superior the word of Allah Almighty, while the desire for booty is secondary, the reward then would not become fruitless. It is true that his reward is not equal to him whose heart does not turn to the booty in principle, for this turning is shortage.

You may argue that the Holy Verses and traditions indicate that the stain of showing off thwarts the reward, and the same is true of the stain of pursuit of booty, traffic and all worldly fortunes. It is narrated on the authority of Tawus and others that a man asked the Prophet "peace be upon him" about him who does favor or gives in charity and likes to be praised for his deed: would he get reward for his deed? He "peace be upon him" did not know what to say to him until the following Holy Verse was revealed: " Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner." (Al-Kahf 110)

﴿ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴾

(Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Al-Hakim). Of course, he intended to gather both reward and praise together.

It is narrated on the authority of Mu'adh "Allah be pleased with him" that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "The least degree of showing off is a kind of polytheism." (This is reported by At-Tabarani and Al-Hakim).

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" from the Prophet "peace be upon him" that he said: "It would be said to him who joined partners with Allah in the deed he did: "Take your reward from him for whom you did it."

It is narrated on the authority of Ubadah "Allah be pleased with him" that Allah Almighty says: "I am the most independent among those who are independent from any partner: whoever does a deed for Me in which he joins a partner with Me, I then give My portion to that partner." (Malik in his Muwatta').

It is also narrated on the authority of Abu Musa "Allah be pleased with him" that a Bedouin came to the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" and said: "O Messenger of Allah! A man fights out of bravery, and a man out of fanaticism, and a man fights in order for his high position to be known: Which of those fights in the Cause of Allah?" on that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever fights in order for the word of Allah to be superior fights in the Cause of Allah."

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "You say that so and so is a martyr, and perhaps he (before he is killed) has filled in between his riding mount with silver coins."

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Whoever emigrates seeking anything of those worldly fortunes, then, it would be for him."

In reply to that, let me say that those Hadiths do not contradict what we have mentioned. They address such as does not intend by his deed but the worldly fortunes. We have mentioned that this is obedience and aggression, not because pursuing the worldly fortunes is unlawful. What is unlawful is to pursue it by the religious deeds, for that implies showing off and perverting the worship from its right place. We seek refuge with Allah Almighty from that. Man could hardly be free from those secondary stains except rarely, and of course they reduce the reward, but do not thwart it entirely.

But this does not mean that man, by so doing, is not on the verge of a great risk, for he might think that the stronger motive is the intention to come close to Allah, while the self fortunes prevail over his innermost secret. That is extremely hidden. Reward does not come but by the sheer sincerity, and a servant could hardly be certain of his sincerity, no matter how cautious he might be. For this reason, even after perfect industriousness, he still continues to be wavering between acceptability and rejection, lest his worship might have an evil whose unfavorable consequence is more than the reward expected from it. As such were the fearful from among these endued with deep insights, and as such everyone endued with insight should be.

That is the significance of the statement of Sufyan "may Allah have mercy upon him": "I do not mind about what seems from my deed."

According to Abd-Al-Aziz Ibn Abu Rawad "may Allah have mercy upon him": "I have lived neighboring that house for sixty years, and performed Hajj sixty times, and I have never done any of the deeds of Allah Almighty but that I counted myself and found that Satan's share in it is greater than Allah's. would that I neither have a reward nor bear a sin."

Nevertheless, the deed should not be left when there is fear from the evil of showing off, for that is the final purpose of Satan. The point here is that sincerity should not be lost. When one leaves the deed, he has indeed wasted both the deed and the sincerity together. According to Al-Fudail: "To leave the deed for the sake of people is showing off, and to do deeds for the sake of people is polytheism; and sincerity is that Allah delivers you from both."

CHAPTER THREE: TRUTH
ITS VIRTUE AND REAL NATURE

Explication Of Virtue Of Truth

Allah Almighty said: " Among the Believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allah." (Al-Ahzab 23)

﴿ مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا۟ مَا عَـٰهَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise, and one continues to tell the truth until he is written with Allah as a sincere affirmer of truth; and lie leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to fire (of Hell), and one continues to tell lies until he is written with Allah as a liar." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud).

It suffices for the virtue of truthfulness that Allah Almighty describes the Prophets "peace be upon them" as sincere affirmers of truth in His statement: "(Also) mention in the Book (the story of) Abraham: He was a man of truth: A prophet." (Maryam 41)

﴿ وَٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾

And: "Also mention in the Book (the story of) Isma'il: he was (strictly) true to (what he promised, and he was a Messenger (and) a Prophet." (Maryam 54

﴿ وَٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِسْمَـٰعِيلَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ ٱلْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

And: "Also mention in the Book the case of Idris: he was a man of truth (and sincerity), (and) a prophet." (Maryam 56)

﴿ وَٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِدْرِيسَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them": "There are four characteristics, and whoever gets them has indeed profited: Truthfulness, modesty, good manners and gratitude."

According to Bishr Ibn Al-Harith "may Allah have mercy upon him":

"Whoever treats Allah with truthfulness gets estranged from the people."

According to Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Make truthfulness your riding mount, truth your sword, and Allah Almighty your finale."

A man said to a wise: "I have never seen a truthful person." On that he said to him: "Had you been truthful, you would have recognized the truthful."

It is narrated on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Ali Al-Kinani "may Allah have mercy upon him": "We have found that the religion of Allah Almighty is based on three principles: Truth, truthfulness and justice. Truth pertains to organs and parts of body, justice to hearts, and truthfulness to minds."

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: " On the Day of Judgment will you see those who told lies against Allah; their faces will be turned black; is there not in Hell an abode for the Haughty?" (Az-Zumar 60)

﴿ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ تَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وُجُوهُهُم مُّسْوَدَّةٌ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴾

Ath-Thawri "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "It is those who claimed the love for Allah Almighty to which they were not true."

Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "O David! Whoever is true to Me in his secret, I would confirm his truthfulness among the creatures in public."

According to a learned man: "There is a consensus among the religious scholars and jurists on three characteristics, and if they are held valid, salvation lies in them, and none of them could be achieved without the others: Faith in Islam that is pure from religious innovations and inclinations, truthfulness to Allah Almighty in deeds, and the lawfulness of sustenance."

According to Wahb Ibn Munabbih "may Allah have mercy upon him": "I have found on the margin of the Torah twenty-two pieces of wisdom which the righteous among the children of Israel used to gather on and study: "There is no treasure more beneficial than knowledge, nor is there wealth more profitable than forbearance, nor is there a status lower than anger, nor is there a companion more pleasing than the good deed, nor is there a friend more disgraceful than ignorance, nor is there honor more cherished than piety, nor is there is generosity more fulfilling than leaving inclination, nor is there a deed better than meditation, nor is there a good deed higher in rank than patience, nor is there a misdeed more shameful than arrogance, nor is there a medicine more lenient than kindness, nor is there an ailment more painful than foolishness, nor is there a messenger more just than the truth, nor is there an evidence more sincere in advice than truthfulness, nor is there poverty more humiliating than covet, nor is there richness more wretched than collecting wealth, nor is there a life more pleasing than health, nor is there a living more satisfying than chastity, nor is there a worship better than submission (of heart to Allah), nor is there asceticism better than satisfaction, nor is there a guard more keeping than silence, nor is there an absent closer than death."

According to Muhammad Ibn Sa'id Al-Marwazi "may Allah have mercy upon him": "If you seek Allah with truthfulness, He endows you with a mirror therewith to see everything of wonders of this world and the hereafter."

According to Abu Bakr Al-Warraq "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Observe truthfulness in what is between you and Allah, and kindness in what is between you and the people."

It was said to Sahl "may Allah have mercy upon him": "What is the foundation of that matter (of religion) on which we are?" He said: "Truthfulness, generosity and bravery." It was said to him: "Give us more." He said: "Piety, modesty and lawful sustenance."

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: The Prophet "peace be upon him" was asked about perfection, thereupon he said: "To tell the truth, and act upon truthfulness."

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: " That (Allah) may question the (Custodians) of Truth concerning the Truth they (were charged with)" (Al-Ahzab 8)

﴿ لِّيَسْـَٔلَ ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

Al-Junaid "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "Those who are true to themselves would be questioned about the extent to which they are true to their Lord Almighty. That is, indeed, a very dangerous matter.

Explication Of Real Nature, Meaning And Ranks Of Truth

It should be known to you that truthfulness applies to six things: truthfulness in speech, truthfulness in intention and will, truthfulness in determination, truthfulness in fulfillment of determination, truthfulness in the deed, and truthfulness in achieving all stations of religion. Whoever is characterized by truthfulness in all of those six is a sincere affirmer of truth.

On the other hand, the truthful are of different ranks according to the fields to which they are true. Whoever has a fortune of truthfulness in anything of those six, he is regarded truthful but in relation with that very thing.

The first type: Truthfulness in speech. Its field is news and narrations. The news might pertain to the past or to the future, including the fulfillment of the promise. In this respect, it is incumbent upon every servant to keep his/her tongue, and not to tell but the truth. That is the most famous and prominent type of truthfulness. Whoever keeps his tongue from telling about things differently from what they really are is indeed truthful.

Therefore, this truthfulness has two supplementary conditions: the first is to avoid allusion and indirect reference to things. It is said that allusion acts on behalf of telling lies. What is forbidden concerning telling lies is to tell about a thing differently from what it really is. But in some cases, the allusion is needed and required to serve a particular benefit, like, for instance, disciplining children and women, caution from wrongdoers, fighting enemies, and avoiding their learning anything about the secrets of the king, and so on. Whoever is forced to do anything of that, his truthfulness in it is that his speech should be for the Sake of Allah Almighty, in so far as is commanded by truth and required by religion: if he observes that condition, then, he would be truthful in his speech even if he tells about the thing differently from what it really is, for truthfulness is not intended for itself in so much as to indicate and invite to the truth. So, let him regard not its external form but its internal significance.

It is true that in such cases, one should incline to allusion as much as is possible for him to do. Whenever the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" intended to set out for a holy battle, he would allude to another one, in order to conceal from the enemies the news of the originally intended battle. (This is reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ka'b Ibn Malik). That does not belong to telling lies at all.

In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Not a liar is he who makes peace between two, by saying or conveying good words between them (on behalf of each other)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Umm Kulthum Bint Uqbah Ibn Abu Mu'ait).

He "peace be upon him" gave concession to speak (be it true or false) according to what serves the benefit in three cases: Making peace between two persons, having two wives, and fighting in the Cause of Allah. Truthfulness in those cases turns to intention, according to which nothing is observed but the truthfulness of intention and will of good. If his purpose is valid, his intention is true, and his will is good, he would be truthful regardless of his speech, in which case, allusion is preferable.

The second condition is to observe the meaning of truthfulness in his words therewith he talks privately to his Lord Almighty. It is like his statement: "For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah." (Al-An'am 79)

﴿ إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ ﴾

If, while saying so, his heart is diverted from Allah Almighty, and rather devoted to worldly hopes and his own desires, then, he is a liar. The same applies to his statement: "You do we worship" and: "I am the servant of Allah": if he is not characterized by the real servitude and has another purpose than Allah Almighty, he would not be truthful in his speech, and on the Day of Judgement, if he is asked to prove his servitude to Allah Almighty, he would fail to confirm it. That is because if he is a servant of himself, a servant of his world, or a servant of his desires, of a surety, he would not be true to his statement that he is a servant of Allah Almighty. That is the meaning of truthfulness in speech.

The second type: Truthfulness in intention and will. That kind goes back to sincerity. That is, there is no motive for his movement and stillness other than Allah Almighty. If it is stained with any of the worldly fortunes, then the truthfulness of intention would become invalid, and by that consideration, it is possible to call him a liar. A righteous said: "Truthfulness is to observe the oneness of Allah in your purpose." In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " When the Hypocrites come to you, they say, "We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah." Yea, Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger, and Allah bears witness that the Hypocrites are indeed liars." (Al-Munafiqun 1)

﴿ إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ قَالُوا۟ نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١﴾ ﴾

Although they told the truth when they said that he is the Messenger of Allah,

Allah Almighty described them as liars, not in terms of their speech, but in terms of their intention and mysteries of hearts. Thus, one meaning of truthfulness goes back to the true intention, which is sincerity. Every truthful should be sincere in his intention.

The third type is truthfulness in determination. A man might have determination first before deed, saying: "If Allah bestows money upon me, I would give in charity", and "If I meet an enemy, I would fight in the Cause of Allah Almighty", and "If Allah Almighty endows me with an office of ruling, I would do justice and not disobey Allah Almighty", etc. That determination might coincide with truthful and perfect power in himself, or hesitation, reluctance or inclination in it, that contradicts truthfulness. Here, the truthful or sincere affirmer of truth is he whose determination coincides with perfect power in all good things, with neither reluctance, nor hesitation, nor inclination from it. It is the same as stated by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him": "To move forward with my head being chopped off is better for me than to be a ruler over a people including Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him"." He found in himself the decisive determination and truthful love not to be a ruler in presence of Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him".

Of a surety, the sincere affirmers of truth in determination are of different ranks: One might have determination, but not strong enough to lead him to accept killing. Moreover, among the truthful believers, there was such as if he was given the freedom to choose whether he or Abu Bakr should be killed, his life would be dearer to him than that of Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him"

The fourth type: Truthfulness in fulfillment of determination. The soul might have an immediate determination to do a particular deed, since there is no trouble nor difficulty in giving a promise. But when one comes to do the promised deed, his determination would weaken before the prevailing desires, and thus he would not be able to fulfill his determination. That contradicts truthfulness in it. This is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: " Among the Believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allah." (Al-Ahzab 23)

﴿ مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا۟ مَا عَـٰهَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" from his paternal uncle Anas Ibn An-Nadr "Allah be pleased with him" that he did not attend the holy battle of Badr with the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". He felt it difficult on himself and said: "I was absent from the first holy battle fought by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". By Allah, if Allah gives me the opportunity to attend another holy battle with the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" I would show to Allah what I am going to do in fighting." In the coming year, he attended the holy battle of Uhud. Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh "Allah be pleased with him" received him and asked him: "Where are you going O Abu Amr?" He said: "How pleasant the smell of Paradise is! Indeed, I detect its smell behind Uhud." He fought until he was killed, and over eighty sword strikes and arrow shots were found in his body. His sister (Ar-Rubai) Bint An-Nadr said: "I have never recognized the body of my brother except from the dress he was wearing." On

that occasion, the following Holy Verse was revealed: " Among the Believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allah." (Al-Ahzab 23)

﴿ مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا۟ مَا عَـٰهَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

(This is reported by At-Tirmidhi).

It is further narrated that on the day of the holy battle of Uhud, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" stood at the body of Mus'ab Ibn Umair "Allah be pleased with him" while he was lying on his face as a martyr, and he was the carrier of the flag of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" on that day. On that he said: "Among the Believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allah: Of them some have completed their vow (to the extreme), and some (still) wait: But they have never changed (their determination) in the least." (Al-Ahzab 23)

﴿ مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا۟ مَا عَـٰهَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُم مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُۥ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا۟ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

(Abu Na'im in his Hilyah on the authority of Ubaid Ibn Umair)

It is narrated on the authority of Fadalah Ibn Ubaid that he said: I heard Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" saying: I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "The martyrs are four types: (The first is) a believing man of good faith who met the enemy and was true to Allah in fighting until he was killed: It is that to which the people would raise their eyes on the Day of Judgement as such" and he raised his head until his hat fell down from him. The sub-narrator said: "I do not know whether it was the hat of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" or the hat of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" which fell down." "(the second is) a man of good faith, and when he met the enemy, he seemed as if his face was beaten with thorns, and while being so, he received an arrow and was killed: He would be in the second rank. (The third is) a believing man who mixed a righteous deed with a bad deed, and when he met the enemy, he was true to Allah in fighting until he was killed: such would be in the third rank. (The fourth) is a man who transgressed against his soul, and when he met the enemy, he was true to Allah in fighting until he was killed: that would be in the fourth rank." (At-Tirmidhi).

Mujahid "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: Two men came out before an audience and said: "If Allah Almighty bestows upon us wealth we would give in charity." But when Allah gave them wealth, they withheld it. On that occasion, Allah Almighty revealed: " Amongst them are men who made a Covenant with Allah, that if He bestowed on them of His bounty, they would give (largely) in charity, and be truly amongst those who are righteous. But when He did bestow of His bounty, they became covetous, and turned back (from their Covenant), averse (from its fulfillment). So He has put as a consequence Hypocrisy into their hearts, (to last) till the Day whereon they shall meet Him: Because they broke their Covenant with Allah, and because they lied (again and again)." (At-Tawbah 75-76)

﴿ ۞ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ عَـٰهَدَ ٱللَّهَ لَئِنْ ءَاتَىٰنَا مِن فَضْلِهِۦ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُم مِّن

فَضْلِهِۦ بَخِلُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَتَوَلَّوا۟ وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

That type of truthfulness is more severe on the people than the previous one. One might have determination to do a thing, and when it comes to implementation, he fails to fulfill his promise to do it, in view of his prevailing desire and inclination. For this reason, Umar "Allah be pleased with him" made exception in his statement when he said: "To move forward with my head being chopped off is better for me than to be a ruler over a people including Abu Bakr, unless myself makes alluring to me something at the time of killing which I do not detect now, for I do not feel safe that killing would be severe on it for which it might change and swerve from its determination."

The fifth type: Truthfulness in deeds. It is that one endeavors in order that his external deeds would not give false impression in opposition to what is really lurking within himself. It is not to leave the deeds in so much as to strive his utmost to make his inward confirm his outward behaviors. That is quite different from showing off, for the dissembler is he who does so intentionally, i.e. to make his apparent deed give false impression of his internal secret. One might seem to stand submissive in his prayer, but not with the intention that people should see him, and his heart is heedless of prayer. Whoever looks at him sees him standing in front of Allah Almighty, while his heart is engaged in his worldly desires and inclinations.

This kind of deeds gives false impression of the internal secret, in which one is liar and not truthful, although he does not do so with the intention to be seen of men. One could be saved from that only by being in secret just like being in public, i.e. to make his inside similar to, if not better than, his outside. In sum, if the outward appearance is different intentionally from the inward thoughts, then, it is called showing off, therewith sincerity is lost, and if it is different unintentionally, then, truthfulness is lost.

That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in his supplication: "O Allah! Make my secret better than my public, and make righteous my public."

According to Yazid Ibn Al-Harith: "If one's secret is similar to his public, then, that is justice; and if his secret is better than his public, then, that is excellent; and if his public is better than his secret, then, that is injustice."

According to Atiyyah Ibn Abd-Al-Ghafir: "If the believer's secret agrees with his public, Allah Almighty then commends him before angels, saying: 'That is really My servant.'"

According to Abd-Al-Wahid Ibn Zaid: "Whenever Al-Hassan ordered the people to do anything, he would act upon it most among them, and whenever he forbade them to do anything, he would leave it most among them. I have never seen a man whose secret is similar to his public than him "may Allah have mercy upon him"."

Overall, to have one's secret similar to (if not better than) his public, is a kind of truthfulness that is required from all the servants.

The sixth type: Truthfulness in the stations of religion. It is the highest degree and the dearest kind of truthfulness. It is like truthfulness in the stations

of fear, hope, honoring, asceticism, contentment, reliance (on Allah), love (for Him), and all such stations. Those stations have starting points, ending points, and final facts, and the truthful is he who attains their final facts.

In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " Only those are Believers who have believed in Allah and His Messenger, and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the Cause of Allah: such are the sincere ones." (Al-Hujurat 15)

﴿ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ ﴾

And: "But it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day...Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing." (Al-Baqarah 177)

﴿ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ﴾

It is narrated that Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" was asked about faith thereupon he recited that Holy Verse. It was said to him: "We asked you about faith!" he said: "I asked the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" about faith, thereupon he recited to me that Holy Verse."

Therefore, to attain the final facts of those stations is very difficult, for they are infinite. But every servant has a certain fortune from them in accordance with his state of weakness and strength. The stronger his fortune is, the closer he is to truthfulness, and vice versa. The gnosis of Allah Almighty, honoring Him and fear of Him are never-ending.

For this reason, the Prophet "peace be upon him" said to Gabriel "peace be upon him": "I like to see you in your real form on which you are created." He said: "You could not endure that." He said: "No, let me see you." He gave him an appointment in Baqi' on a night in which the moon was full, and when he came to him, the Prophet "peace be upon him" looked at him and behold! He filled the horizons, i.e. the sides of the sky. On that the Prophet "peace be upon him" fell unconscious. When he restored his consciousness, Gabriel "peace be upon him" had returned to his form in which he used to appear to him. The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "I have never think that there is such one among the creatures of Allah." Gabriel "peace be upon him" said to him: "Then, what do you think if you see Israfil? Indeed, the Throne (of Majesty) is on his shoulder, and his feet are penetrating underneath the farthest end of the lowest earth. But even, he shrinks, out of the grandeur of Allah Almighty, until he becomes like a swallow." Consider then how grandeur and majesty overwhelm him so much that he is reduced to such a state. All the angels are not like this, due to their disparity in gnosis. That is the truthfulness in honoring.

It is further narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the night I was made to set out on a night journey to the heaven, I came upon the highest company (of angels and Prophets), and Gabriel was as quiet as a worn-out covering (that is thrown on the camel's back), out of fear and honoring of Allah Almighty." (Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Anas).

Although the Companions were fearful, they never attained the degree of the

fear of the Prophet "peace be upon him". The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "None shall attain the real nature of faith until he sees all the people like the dung in comparison with Allah, and when he returns to himself, he sees it the most despicable of them all."

On the other hand, the degrees of truthfulness are never-ending. If one is truthful in all those stations, he then is the sincere affirmer and lover of truth. But the people are different in their truthfulness according to their fortunes from them. According to Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh "Allah be pleased with him": "There are only three things in which I am strong, and in all things other than them, I am weak: I have never offered a prayer during which I engaged in a self talk until I finished from it; nor have I attended a funeral procession during which I engaged in anything other than it until its burial was finished; nor have I heard anything from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" but that I thought it to be true." In his comment on that, Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "I have never thought that those characteristics could gather but in the Prophet "peace be upon him"." Many are the companions who offered prayers and attended funeral processions, and did not attain such a high degree of truthfulness.

According to Abu Bakr Al-Warraq: "Truthfulness are of three kinds: the truthfulness of monotheism, the truthfulness of obedience, and the truthfulness of gnosis. The truthfulness of monotheism implies the laymen of believers. Allah Almighty said: " And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers, they are the Sincere Lovers and affirmers of Truth." (Al-Hadid 19)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦٓ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصِّدِّيقُونَ ﴾

The truthfulness of obedience includes those of knowledge and abstention. The truthfulness of gnosis implies those alliance of Allah Almighty, which are like the mountains on the earth."

According to Ja'far As-Sadiq: "Truthfulness is self-mortification and not to give preference to anyone over Allah Almighty in the same way as He does not give preference to anyone over you, as shown in His statement: "He has chosen you." (Al-Hajj 78)

﴿ هُوَ ٱجْتَبَىٰكُمْ ﴾

It was revealed to Moses "peace be upon him": "If I love a servant, I would try him with distresses so heavy and severe that even the mountains could not withstand in order to see his truthfulness: If I found him truthful, I would take him as an ally and beloved, otherwise, if I find him complaining Me to My creatures, I would disappoint him and care not." Among the signs of truthfulness is to conceal both adversities and acts of worship, and dislike to show them to anyone of the people.

That is the end of the book of truthfulness and sincerity, and it would be followed by the book of watching and reckoning, and praise be to Allah.

Book eight: Watching and reckoning

It is the eighth book of the quarter of saviors of the revival of religion sciences

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah, Who stands over every soul (and knows) all that it does, watches over every organ and knows what it commits, learns the secrets of the hearts when they have an inner thought, and accounts the passing thoughts of His servants when they are disturbed, from Whose knowledge nothing even as little as an atom's weight in the heavens and on earth escapes, Who would reckon His servant for all of their deeds, be they significant or insignificant, Who accepts the acts of worship from His servants, no matter how little they might be, and forgives for them their sins no matter how great they might be: Exalted be He Whose favor extends over all servants, and Whose mercy encompasses all the creatures in the world and hereafter. By virtue of His gifts, the hearts expand to faith, by virtue of His success and help, the organs and parts of body are devoted to and disciplined by the acts of worship, by virtue of His guidance, the darkness of ignorance is removed from the hearts, by virtue of His support, the plots of Satan become futile, and by virtue of His care, the scale of good deeds overweighs (that of misdeeds in the hereafter).

Allah's blessing and peace be upon Muhammad, the chief of all the Prophets and Messengers, and upon his family, the chiefs of the people, and his companions, the leaders of the pious and righteous. Coming to the point:

Allah Almighty said: " We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. And if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account." (Al-Anbiya' 47)

﴿ وَنَضَعُ ٱلْمَوَٰزِينَ ٱلْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَـٰسِبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ ﴾

And: " And the Book (of Deeds) will be placed (before you); and you wilt see the sinful in great terror because of what is (recorded) therein; they will say, "Ah! woe to us! what a Book is this! it leaves out nothing small or great, but takes account thereof!" they will find all that they did, placed before them: and not one will your Lord treat with injustice." (Al-Kahf 49)

﴿ وَوُضِعَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبُ فَتَرَى ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَـٰوَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَـٰذَا ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّآ أَحْصَىٰهَا ۚ وَوَجَدُوا۟ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ حَاضِرًا ۗ وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾

And: "On the Day that Allah will raise them all up (again) and show them the truth (and meaning) of their conduct. Allah has reckoned its (value), though they may have forgotten it, for Allah is Witness to all things." (Al-Mujadilah 6)

﴿ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوٓا۟ ۚ أَحْصَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

And: " On that Day will men proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the Deeds that they (had done). Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it." (Az-Zalzalah 6-8)

﴿ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ ٱلنَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا۟ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

And: "And fear the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then shall every soul be paid what it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly." (Al-Baqarah 281)

﴿ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾ ﴾

And: "On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done, and all the evil it has done, it will wish there were a great distance between it and its evil. But Allah cautions you (to remember) Himself. And Allah is full of kindness to those that serve Him." (Al Imran 30)

﴿ يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِن سُوٓءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُۥٓ أَمَدًۢا بَعِيدًا ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسَهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ رَءُوفٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

And: " And know that Allah knows what is in your hearts, and take heed of Him; and know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing." (Al-Baqarah 235)

﴿ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ فَٱحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾ ﴾

Thus, those endued with insights came to know that their Lord is (as a Guardian) on a watch-tower over them, and that on the Day of Judgement, they would be called to account, and questioned about even the atom's weights of passing thoughts and glances. Moreover, they have become certain that nothing would save them from that except their accounting and watching over themselves at every moment in this world. That is because whoever accounts himself in this world before he would be called to account, no doubt, his reckoning on the Day of Judgement would be lightened from him, but whoever does not account himself in this world, would persist in grief and regret, and his standing on the Day of Judgement would be very long, and his sins would lead him to humiliation and disgrace.

When this fact was exposed to them, they came to know that nothing would save them from that unfavorable consequence other than their obedience to Allah, Who commanded them to adhere to patience as he stated: " O you who believe! persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; remain positioned permanently to guard yourselves; and fear Allah; that you may prosper." (Al Imran 200)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱصْبِرُوا۟ وَصَابِرُوا۟ وَرَابِطُوا۟ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾ ﴾

They first remained positioned in guard of themselves by putting conditions, then by watching, then by reckoning, then by punishing themselves, then by

mortifying themselves, and finally by admonishing themselves. In this way, they have six stations concerning their being positioned in guard of themselves. Each of those should be explained in detail to explicate its virtue and real nature. The origin of them all is reckoning. But every kind of reckoning follows putting conditions and then watching, and in the event of loss, it leads to admonishment and punishment. So, let us go on explicating those stations, and success is with Allah Almighty.

CHAPTER ONE
FIRST STATION: PUTTING CONDITIONS

It should be known to you that the final demand of those involved in traffic who share in commodities and goods at the time of accounting is the sound profit. As well as the trader gives his property to his partner to invest it in traffic, and in the end he accounts him, the mind in this issue stands for the trader on the way to the hereafter. The profit he demands is the purification of the soul, therewith it prospers. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty says: " Truly he succeeds that purifies it, And he fails that corrupts it!" (Ash-Shams 9-10)

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ۝ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا ۝ ﴾

To be sure, its prosperity results from the righteous deeds. The mind seeks the aid of the soul in this trade, by using and subjugating it in what justifies and purifies it, in the same way as a trader seeks the aid of his partner to invest his wealth for him.

As well as the partner might turn into a foe to dispute with him over the profit, and this is why he needs first to put conditions on him, second to watch over him, third to account him, and fourth to punish or admonish him, similarly, the mind needs first to put conditions on the soul, by offering to it the duties and stipulating the necessary conditions, and guiding it to the way of prosperity, and asking it with firmness to follow the ways that are shown to it. Then, it does not neglect to watch over it even for a single moment, for were it to indulge in watching over it, it would prove treacherous and waste the capital.

After finishing from that, it should account it, and ask it to fulfill the conditions put on it. That is a traffic whose profit is the supreme Paradise, and attainment of the Lote Tree with the Prophets and martyrs. So, to account the self minutely is more important than to account anyone else in the profits of this world, given that they are despicable in comparison with the never-ending bliss of the hereafter. Whatever the worldly profits might be, they are perishable, and no good lies in a good that is perishable:On the contrary, perishable evil is better than perishable good, for when evil perishes, the pleasure with its disappearance becomes permanent, whereas the sorrow for the loss of the perishable good survives forever.

For this reason, it is incumbent on everyone who has faith in Allah and the Last Day not to indulge in accounting himself and making it tight upon it in its motion and stillness, passing thoughts and steps. Every breath one takes during his lifetime is a precious gem that could never be substituted, for by which a

treasure could be purchased, whose bliss is inexhaustible.

When one gets up in the morning and offers Fajr prayer, he should dedicate his heart for an hour to put conditions on himself, saying to it: "I have no good to traffic with other than the lifetime, and once it is over, the capital is consumed. That new day is a respite given to me by Allah Almighty, and were He to send me to death, I would hope that He should return me to the world even for one day to work righteousness. So, work as if you died and then returned once again to this world. Beware and beware of wasting any moment of that day, for any breath I take is a precious gem that could not be valued.

Furthermore, it should be known to you, O soul, that every day and night consists of twenty-four hours. It is narrated that "per a day and a night, twenty-four stores set in rows are spread before the servant. One of them is opened to him which he sees filled with lights, representing the good deeds he has done at that certain hour, for which he becomes joyful and cheerful because of seeing those lights, which are his means with Allah the Sovereign, so much that were it to be distributed among the denizens of the fire, that joy would dazzle them from feeling the pain of the fire. At the same time, another black dark store is opened to him, exuding stink whose darkness overwhelms him, representing the hour in which he has committed sins, for which he receives of terror and horror so much that were it to be distributed among the inhabitants of Paradise, it would distract their pleasure and delight in it. A third empty store is opened to him, having nothing to please or aggrieve him."

Thus, he should ask himself to strive its utmost to fill its store with good things on that very day, and not to rely on laziness and idleness, lest it would lose the high degrees of Illiyyun that others might attain, which brings about never-ending grief and regret, even were such to be forgiven and admitted to the Garden. A wise man said in this connection: "Suppose that the evildoer is forgiven, is it not that he would lose the reward of the doers of good?" by that, he refers to the loss and grief such would receive. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " The Day that He assembles you (all) for a Day of Assembly, - that will be a day of mutual loss and gain (among you)." (At-Taghabun 9)

﴿ يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ لِيَوْمِ ٱلْجَمْعِ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ ٱلتَّغَابُنِ ﴾

As such his advice to his soul during his different times should be.

After that, he should resume advising it concerning its seven organs: the eye, the ear, the tongue, the abdomen, the genitals, the hand and the foot. These are servants to his soul in that traffic. For the Hell, there are seven gates, to each of which a portion is allotted. Those gates are assigned to the sinners according to the organ with which they disobey Allah. Thus, one should advise them to safeguard themselves from committing sins as follows:

The eye should be kept from looking at the unlawful, or looking at a Muslim with the eye of contempt, and in sum from looking at what is dispensable, for Allah Almighty would question the servant about his dispensable glances, in the same way as He would ask him about the useless speech. Once he diverts it from that, he should immediately engage it in what is profitable for it, i.e. to do only

that for which it is created. He should look at the wonders of the making of Allah Almighty with the eye of consideration to take lessons to learn, to look at the good deeds to take them as example to follow, to look at the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger "peace be upon him", and to go through the books of wisdom and knowledge to receive admonition and get benefit.

He should do the same concerning all organs, particularly the tongue and the abdomen. As far as the tongue is concerned, it is free in talking, and there is no restriction on it. Its crime is severe concerning backbiting, talebearing, telling lies, giving prestige to oneself, criticizing and condemning others, invoking evil on enemies and disputation in speech, etc. But it is created only to persist in remembrance and reminding others of Allah Almighty, learning and teaching, guiding the servants to the way of Allah Almighty, making peace and reconciliation between people, and the like of such good things. So, one should put condition on himself not to move his tongue during the day but in remembrance of Allah Almighty. One's speech should be remembrance, his look consideration, and his silence meditation: " Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it)." (Qaf 18)

﴿ مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِن قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴾

As for abdomen, one should force himself to leave greed and not eat but from the lawful, avoid what is suspicious, withdraw from appetence, and restrict himself only to what is necessary to sustain him. In this issue, he should put condition on himself that in case she does anything in opposition to that, he would punish it by withholding all abdominal appetites from it, so that it would lose more than what it gains.

As such he should put conditions on himself concerning all organs and parts of body. Then, he should resume his advice to it concerning the regular acts of worship which he does daily, and then the supererogatory deeds which he has power to do. Those conditions are lacking everyday. But if one gets accustomed to do so for many days and his soul complies with him in fulfillment of them, then there is need for him to repeat putting such conditions everyday. If it complies with him in part and not in all, he still needs to put conditions at least in the remaining part. But even, everyday, there is a new event that requires a new ruling and prescription, in which Allah Almighty has a right on him. That applies most to him who is engaged in anything of the worldly occupations, for no day could pass without a new incident in which he needs to observe the right of Allah. He then should put condition on himself to adhere to uprightness and honesty, comply with the truth concerning its course, and beware of the evil consequence of negligence.

That is the beginning stage of being positioned in guard of oneself. It is to reckon the self before the deed. However, reckoning might be after or before the deed by means of warning of what would be in the future, as confirmed by the statement of Allah: " And know that Allah knows what is in your hearts, and take heed of Him; and know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing." (Al-Baqarah 235)

﴿ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ فَٱحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴾

In confirmation of such reckoning, Allah Almighty says: "O you who believe! when you go abroad in the cause of Allah, investigate carefully." (An-Nisa' 94)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا۟ ﴾

And: "O you who believe! if a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest you harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what you have done." (Al-Hujurat 6)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَٰدِمِينَ ﴾

And: "It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein." (Qaf 16)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِۦ نَفْسُهُۥ ۖ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ ٱلْوَرِيدِ ﴾

He said so by means of warning of what would be in the future.

In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Ubadah Ibn As-Samit that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said to a man by way of instruction: "If you intend to do a thing, then, think first about its consequence: if it is right, then, do it, otherwise, desist from it."

According to a wise man: "If you like your mind to prevail over your inclination, then, do not behave in response to the desire immediately, until you think about the consequence: indeed, regret resides in the heart longer than does the relief of desire."

According to Luqman: "If a faithful believer sees the consequence (before he does anything), he would be safe from regret."

It is further narrated on the authority of Shaddad Ibn Aws "Allah be pleased with him" from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that he said: "The intelligent among the people is he who accounts himself (during his lifetime), and works for what is to come after his death; and the foolish is he who subjugates his soul to its inclination and then expects from Allah (to forgive for him)."

According to Umar "Allah be pleased with him": "Reckon yourselves before you would be called to account (on the Day of Judgement), and weigh them before you would be weighed and be ready for the greater display."

He wrote the following phrase to Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari "Allah be pleased with him": "Account yourself at the time of ease even before you do at the time of adversity." He asked Ka'b "Allah be pleased with him": "How do you find it in the Scripture?" he said: "Woe to the accountant of the earth from the Accountant of the heaven." He struck him with the stick and said: "Except for such as reckons himself." On that Ka'b said to him: "O Commander of Believers! That (which you have said) is besides (what I have said) in the Torah, with nothing between them."

CHAPTER TWO
SECOND STATION: WATCHING

Once a man put such conditions on himself, there still remains his role of watching and observing it with the watching eye. That is because were it to be left freely, it would transgress the due bound and become corrupt. So, let us here mention first the virtue of watching, and then its different degrees.

Explication Of Virtue Of Watching

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah (Al-Bukhari) and Umar (Muslim) "may Allah be pleased with them" that Gabriel "peace be upon him" appeared in the form of a good-looking man and asked the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" about Ihsan (faithfulness), thereupon he said: "It is to worship Allah as if you see Him, and it is true that you really do not see Him, you should put in mind that He sees you."

Allah Almighty said, in confirmation of that: " Is then He Who stands over every soul (and knows) all that it does, (like any others)?" (Ar-Ra'd 33)

﴿ أَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَآئِمٌ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

And: "Knows he not that Allah does see?" (Al-'Alaq 14)

﴿ أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَرَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

And: "for Allah ever watches over you." (An-Nisa' 1)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾ ﴾

And: "Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants." (Al-Mu'minun 8)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَـٰنَـٰتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَٰعُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

Ibn Al-Mubarak "may Allah have mercy upon him" said to a man: "Watch (the commandments of) Allah Almighty." He asked him about its interpretation, thereupon he said to him: "Be as if you ever see Allah."

According to Abd-Al-Wahid Ibn Zaid "may Allah have mercy upon him": "If my master watches over me, then, I do not care about anyone else."

According to Abu Uthman Al-Maghribi: "The best thing to which one should adhere in this way is accounting and watching of himself, and driving his work with the help of knowledge."

According to Ibn Ata': "The best act of worship is to watch over the Real (the commandments of Allah) all the time."

According to Al-Jariri: "This matter (of religion) of ours is based on two principles: to adhere to watching over (the commandments of) Allah Almighty, and make knowledge stand to lead your outward behaviour."

According to Abu Uthman: Abu Hafs said to me: "When you sit to instruct the people, instruct first yourself, and do not be deceived by their gathering round you, for they indeed watch over your outward conduct, whereas Allah Almighty watches over your inward secret."

It is related that a Shaykh had a student whom he honored and highly

esteemed. His colleagues, who were older than him, complained to the Shaykh how he made that young man more eminent than them. To prove his worth of that estimation, he invited all of them and gave each a bird and a knife and asked each of them to slay his bird in a place where none could see him. All of them returned some time later with their birds slain, except for that young man who returned with his bird still living. He asked him why he had not slain it, thereupon he said to him: "I have not found a place where none could see me, for Allah Almighty watches over me wherever I am." They appreciated from him that watching (of the commandments of Allah) and said: "You are worthy of honoring more than us."

It is further narrated that when Zulaikhah intended to have sexual relation with Yusuf "peace be upon him" she stood and covered the face of an idol which she worshipped. On that he said to her: "What is wrong with you? Do you feel shy of watching a non-living being and I do not feel shy of watching (Allah) the Irresistible Sovereign?"

It is further related that a young man seduced a girl to have sexual relation with her and she said to him: "Do you not feel shy?" he said: "Of whom should I feel shy given that none sees us other than the stars?" she said: "Then, where is the Creator of those stars?"

According to Malik Ibn Dinar "may Allah have mercy upon him": "There are Gardens of Eden, from those of Paradise, in which there are houris created from the roses of Paradise." He was asked: "Then, who would live in them?" he said: Allah Almighty says: "Such as live in the Gardens of Eden are those who, when they intend to do sins, remember My grandeur and then watch Me, whose backs bow out of fear of Me. By My Honor and Glory, I intend to send punishment on the inhabitants of the earth, and once I look at those who are hungry and thirsty for fear of Me, I divert punishment from them."

When Al-Muhasibi "may Allah have mercy upon him" was asked about watching (of Allah) he said: "The first step of it is the heart's knowledge of the nearness of Allah Almighty."

It is narrated that Allah Almighty said to the angels: "You are entrusted to watch the outward conduct, and I am watcher over the inward secrets."

According to Sahl "may Allah have mercy upon him": "The heart does not get adorned with anything better and more honorable than the servant's knowledge that Allah is witness and watcher over him wherever he is ."

When a wise man was asked about the following statement of Allah Almighty: " Allah well pleased with them, and they with Him: all this for such as fear their Lord and Cherisher" (Al-Bayyinah 7)

﴿رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ ﴿٨﴾﴾

He said: "It is he who watches (the commandments of) his Lord, reckons ".himself and gets provision for his place of return

Dhun-Nun was asked: "By which should one attain Paradise?" He said: "By five things: uprightness in which there is no crookedness, vigilance in which there is no forgetfulness, watching (the commandments of) Allah Almighty in secret

and public, expecting death by getting ready for it, and reckoning yourself before you would be reckoned."

Humaid At-Tawil said to Sulaiman Ibn Ali: "Instruct me." He said: "If you disobey Allah while you are in privacy thinking that He sees you, then, you have dared to commit a grievous thing; and if you think that He sees you not, then, you have disbelieved in Allah."

According to Sufyan Ath-Thawri "may Allah have mercy upon him": "You have to watch (the commandments of) Him from Whom nothing is hidden, hope in the One Who has the power to fulfill the promise, and beware of Him Who has the power to punish."

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Dinar that he said: I set out in the company of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" to Mecca and on the way we halted to spend the night for rest. Then, a shepherd came down towards him from the mountain and Umar said to him: "O shepherd! Sell me a goat." He said: "I am a slave (and those goats belong to my master)." He said: "Tell him that the wolf has eaten it." He said: "Then, where is Allah?" on that Umar wept and in the morning he went and bought that slave from his master and emancipated him. He said to him: "This word emancipated you in this world, and I expect it would emancipate you (from the fire) in the hereafter."

Explication of real nature and degrees of watching

It should be known to you that watching, in its real nature, is to observe the watcher, and devote the whole attention to him. Whoever avoids doing anything for the sake of somebody, it is said that he watches him, and observes his sake. Watching then is a state of the heart produced from knowledge. This state is reflected on the works of organs and the heart. As for the state, it is that the heart observes the watcher, is devoted and concerned with him. As for the knowledge which produces that state, it is the awareness of the fact that Allah Almighty knows all things concerning the innermost secrets and intentions, watches over the works and deeds of the servants, and stands over every soul and knows all that it does, and that the secret of the heart is exposed to Him in the same way as the outward conduct is exposed to the people.

Once this knowledge becomes certain, i.e. has no doubt at all, it then possesses and prevails over the heart. Such as have that certain knowledge are the closest to Allah Almighty. They are divided into the sincere affirmers of truth, and the companions of the right hand. Their watching is of two degrees:

The first degree is the watching of the nearest (to Allah) among the sincere affirmers of truth. It is the watching of honoring and veneration. That is, the heart is entirely engaged in observation of that glory and majesty, to the extent that it has no place to care about anything else. But we do not want to talk much about the works of that watching in detail, for it is restricted to the heart, whereas the organs abstain from turning to the permissible, let alone the forbidden. It is that man whose concerns turn into only one for Allah Almighty suffices him all concerns and anxieties. Whoever attains that degree becomes heedless of all the people, so much that he never sees who is with him given

that his eyes are open, nor hears what is said to him, given that his ears are sound. That is not impossible. One might be wholeheartedly concerned even with anything or anyone in this world, which is despicable in comparison with the Sovereign of the world, to the extent that he does not sense anything else.

It was said to Abd-Al-Wahid Ibn Zaid: "Do you know that anyone in this time of yours is entirely engaged in his own state from anything else in this world?" he said: "I do not know but a man who would enter upon you this hour." A short while later, Utbah Al-Ghulam came in, to whom Abd-Al-Wahid said: "From where have you come O Utbah?" he said: "From such and such a place" on the way of the market. He asked him: "Whom have you met on the way?" he said: "I have met none."

It is related that Yahya Ibn Zakariyya "peace be upon him" passed by a woman whom he pushed and she fell down on the ground. He was asked: "Why have you done so?" he said: "I did not think her to be but a wall."

It is further related on the authority of a man who said: "I came upon a group of people fighting each other, and there was one sitting apart from them. I moved forward towards him to talk to him and he said: "The remembrance of Allah Almighty is more pleasant." I asked him: "Are you alone?" he said: "I have my Lord and two angels." I asked: "Who among those started first?" he said: "He, for whom Allah has forgiven." I further said to him: "Where is the right way?" he beckoned to the sky and then stood and went away, saying: "Most of Your creatures are occupied from You.""

That is a speech of one who is wholeheartedly engaged in contemplation of Allah Almighty: he never speaks but from Him, nor hears but in Him. Such does not need to watch his organs and tongue, for they never move but within the limit of the state in which he is.

The second degree is the watching of the pious among the companions of the right hand. They have certainty of faith in Allah's knowledge of their outward and inward conduct and hearts. But their observation of glory and majesty does not confound their hearts: they rather remain in the moderate state, having a place to turn to different states and works, along with their watching and observation (of majesty and glory). It is true that their shyness from Allah Almighty prevails over them to the extent that they neither do nor abstain from doing anything before verifying of its validity. They also refrain from anything that might expose them to shame on the Day of Judgement. Since they see that Allah Almighty learns all things about them in this world, they do not need to wait the Day of Judgement.

Whoever is in that degree needs to watch all of his movements and stillness, passing thoughts and glances, and in sum, all his preferences. He should regard them twice: once before the deed and the other during the deed.

As for the consideration before the deed, he should check whether what seems to him and motivates him to do a thing is just for the Sake of Allah Alone or in compliance with the inclination of the soul and fulfillment of Satan's desires. He should stop at it until it is revealed to him by the light of the truth: if it is for the sake of Allah Almighty, let him implement it; and if it is for the sake of

anything else, let him feel shy of Allah, and desist from it, and blame himself for thinking about doing it. That pause in the beginning of matters until their reality are revealed is inevitable and there is no way to discard it. In confirmation of that, it is narrated that "Concerning every movement made by a servant, no matter how trivial it might be, three records are spread out: the first pertains to the reason, the second to the way it is done, and the third to the purpose of doing it."

Once a servant knows that he would be given to such demands and rebuke in case his work is done for anything or anyone other than Allah Almighty, of a surety, he would demand himself before it would be demanded (in the hereafter), and prepare an answer to the question. Let his answer be right. Let not him do anything before verification of its validity, nor move his eyelid nor his finger before meditation.

In confirmation of that, it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to Mu'adh Ibn Jabal "Allah be pleased with him": "The man would be questioned even about applying kohl to his eyes, rubbing clay and touching the garment of his brother with his fingers."

According to Al-Hassan "may Allah have mercy upon him": "It was the habit of the righteous predecessors that whenever anyone of them wanted to give in charity, he would think and verify first: If it would be for the sake of Allah Almighty Alone, he would implement it, otherwise, he would not do it."

That is the first (pre-work) consideration in that watching, from which none is delivered except by strong knowledge and real gnosis of the mysteries of deeds, innermost secrets of the soul and intrigues and plots of Satan. Unless one knows well himself and his Lord, his enemy Iblis, knows what agrees with his inclinations and desires, and differentiates in his intention between it and what Allah likes and approves, no doubt, he would not be delivered in that watching. Most people do things out of ignorance of what Allah Almighty dislikes, thinking that they do good. Think not that the ignorant who has the power to learn is excused for his ignorance. How far! Seeking knowledge is an obligation due upon every Muslim.

That is why a two-rak'ah prayer to be offered by a learnt is better than one thousand rak'ahs to be offered by a layman, for the learned knows well the evils of souls, intrigues and plots of Satan, and places of deception and conceit, from which he safeguards himself, unlike the ignorant who does not know that: then, how should he avoid it? The ignorant continues to trouble himself and Satan continues to be in joy and schadenfreude at him. We seek refuge with Allah from heedlessness and ignorance, for ignorance is the fountainhead of wretchedness and the basis of loss.

It is then the ruling of Allah that one should watch himself whenever he intends to do anything, and seeks to implement it with the organs, and pause until it is revealed to him, by the light of knowledge, that it is for the sake of Allah Almighty, thereupon he should implement it, or for the inclination of the soul thereupon he should desist from it. Unless the first step towards falsehood is driven away, it surely would develop desire, and desire would develop concern, and concern would develop decisive intention, and decisive intention would

develop the act, and the act would develop perdition and destruction. For this reason, the substance of evil should be cut off from its beginning and primal source, i.e. the passing thought, which leads to all things.

If the reality of the event is abstruse and darkens on anyone, he should discover it with the light of knowledge, and seek refuge with Allah Almighty from the cunning of Satan by means of inclination. If he fails to do so depending on his own knowledge, let him then seek guidance by the light of the knowledge of the religious scholars, and flee from the misleading scholars who devote themselves to this world in the same way as, if not more than, he flees from Satan. It is related that Allah Almighty revealed to David "peace be upon him": "Ask not about Me such of scholars as intoxicated by his love for this world, lest he would cut you of My love, for such scholars are those who cut the way upon My servants."

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Allah likes the judicious sight when there is a suspicious matter, and the perfect mind when there is an attacking desire." (Abu Na'im in his Hilyah on the authority of Imran Ibn Hussain). In this Hadith, he "peace be upon him" combined both things, i.e. sight and mind, which are concomitant. Whoever does not have a perfect mind to discern evil from good does not necessarily have a judicious sight to see such difference.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "You are now in a time, in which the best of you is he who hastens (to do good), and there would come upon you a time during which the best of people would be he who verifies (first before doing anything)."

That is why a set of companions, including Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas, Abdullah Ibn Umar, Usamah Ibn Zaid and Muhammad Ibn Maslamah "Allah be pleased with them" refrained from taking part in the conflict between those of Iraq and those of Sham when the matter was abstruse on them. Whoever does not refrain from doing a thing in which suspicion lies, indeed follows his own inclination and admires his own opinion, and deserves the description given by the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in his statement: "You should keep enjoining what is good upon one another, and forbidding one another to do evil until when you see niggardliness being prevalent, the own desires and inclinations being followed, the world being given preference (over the hereafter), and everyone having an opinion will come to admire his own opinion, then, you just have to protect your own soul, and let the common people, for there will be days to come upon you, on which whoever patiently perseveres (on sticking to his faith) will be like the one grasping a piece of fire (in his hand), and whoever works (righteousness) will have a reward like the reward of fifty workers who work as your work." (Abu Dawud on the authority of Abu Tha'labah Al-Khushani).

Furthermore, whoever delves into a suspicious matter without verification opposes the following statement of Allah Almighty: " And pursue not that of which you have no knowledge; for every act of hearing, or of seeing, or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)." (Al-Isra' 36)

﴿ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴾

He also, by so doing, disagrees with the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Beware of assumption (with no evidence), for (groundless) assumption is the falsest of speech."

Due to the difficulty of that matter, Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" used to supplicate with the following supplication: "O Allah! Show me the truth as truth, and bestow upon me (the favor of) following it, and show me falsehood as falsehood and bestow upon me (the favor of) avoiding it, and make it not suspicious for me lest I would follow my inclination."

It is related that Jesus "peace be upon him" said: "The matters are of three kinds: one which seems clear, and it is that which you should follow. Another which seems false, and it is that which you should avoid. The third is suspicious: it is that which you should entrust to the one who is knowledgeable of it." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to supplicate with the following supplication: "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from saying anything in religion without knowledge."

Knowledge then is the greatest favor Allah bestows upon the servants. Faith and revelation of truth also are kinds of knowledge. For this reason, Allah Almighty says, by way of reminding His servants of His favors: : " and great is the Grace of Allah unto you." (An-Nisa' 113)

﴿ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ﴾

Here, He Almighty refers to knowledge. He further says: " if you realize this not, ask of those who possess the Message." (An-Nahl 43)

﴿ فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

And: "Verily We take upon Ourselves to guide." (Al-Lail 12)

﴿ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ ﴾

And: "Nay more, it is for Us to explain it (and make it clear)." (Al-Qiyamah 19)

﴿ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُۥ ﴾

And: " And unto Allah leads straight the Way." (An-Nahl 9)

﴿ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ قَصْدُ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴾

According to Ali "Allah be pleased with him": "Inclination is a partner of blindness; and success lies in abstention from anything when you are put to confusion: how excellent certainty (of faith) is which drives away anxiety! Regret is always the consequence of falsehood; and in telling the truth lies safety. Perhaps a far thing is closer than another which seems close. The stranger is he who has no beloved; and the sincere affirmer and lover of truth is he whose truth in his absence is acknowledge. The evil assumption never produces a beloved. Generosity is the best character, and modesty is a means to every kind of beauty. The most trustworthy handhold is piety; and the strongest means you utilize is

that which is between you and Allah Almighty. You have from your world only what you mend therewith your resting place. Sustenance is of two kinds: that which you pursue, and that which pursues you, which, if you do not come to get, it would come to you. If you grieve for what is lost which is in your hand, then, do not grieve for what is lost which is not n your hand. Take evidence from what really was for what has not been yet. Indeed, all matters almost resemble each other, and man rejoices when he gets what he was not to lose, and grieves when he loses what he was not to get. So, do not rejoice so much at what you have from your world, nor should you grieve so much for what you lose from it: on the contrary, let your happiness be with (the good deeds) you have sent forward, and your grief be for (the good deeds) that you have failed to do, your engagement be in your hereafter, and your concern be with what is to come after your death."

In sum, the first consideration a watcher should have is to see whether his intention and deed are for the sake of Allah Almighty or for the sake of anything else. On that occasion, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If one has the following three characteristics, he shall have completed faith: not to fear, in (the religion of) Allah the blame of a blamer; not to make show of anything of his deed; and if two things are offered to him, one for this world and the other for the hereafter, he would give preference to the hereafter over the world." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami in his Firdaws on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

What is revealed to him, for the most part, is that the deed is permissible, but does not concern him, thereupon he leaves it, out of faith in the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "It is out of man's good faith in Islam to leave what does not concern him."

The second consideration of the watcher is when he starts to do the deed. It is to inspect the way it should be done in order to fulfill the right of Allah in it, make good his intention concerning it, complete its form and then do it in the best and most perfect way possible. He should do the same in all his states. If he watches Allah Almighty in all of this, he would be able to worship Him with good intention and deed, and observation of related etiquette.

If he is to sit, for instance, he should sit facing the Qiblah, out of faith in the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "The best posture of sitting is that in which one faces the Qiblah." (Al-Hakim on the authority of Ibn Abbas). He also should not sit on buttocks crossing his legs, for one does not sit with kings like this, and it is the Sovereign of kings Who sees him. According to Ibrahim Ibn Adham "may Allah have mercy upon him": "Once, I sat on my buttocks crossing my legs, thereupon I heard a caller saying to me: "It is as such that one sits with kings?" afterwards, I have never sat in that posture."

If he is to sleep, he should sleep on his right side, facing the Qiblah, and so on. In all of this, he should act upon all etiquettes we have already mentioned in this book. In all that one does, he is either in obedience, or in disobedience, or doing the permissible. His watching concerning obedience is to be sincere and

perfect in worship, observe the etiquettes, and safeguard himself from evil. His watching concerning disobedience is to turn to Allah in repentance and show regrets, give up the sin, feel shy and modest, and engage in meditation. His watching concerning the permissible is to observe the etiquettes, witness the benefactor in the favor, and give thanks for it. A servant, in all his states, has: either a distress on which he should patiently persevere, or a favor for which he should give thanks; and all of this is out of watching. Moreover, a servant, in all of his states, has an act which he should do, a forbidden thing which he should avoid, or a recommended deed which he is encouraged to do, to hasten to get forgiveness from Allah Almighty. Everyone of those has certain limits which should be observed by permanent watching, and whoever transgresses the limits set by Allah Almighty has indeed wronged himself.

One then should inspect himself continuously in those three divisions. If he finishes from the obligatory duties, and finds power in himself to do the supererogatory deeds, let him then seek the best of deeds to engage in, for whoever has the opportunity to get more profit and he wastes it, he indeed is in great loss. Profits are attained by the excellent deeds, and it is with this that the servant takes provision from his world for his hereafter as confirmed by Allah Almighty: "But seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget your portion in this World: but do you good, as Allah has been good to you." (Al-Qasas 77)

﴿ وَٱبْتَغِ فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَأَحْسِن كَمَآ أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ﴾

All of this might be obtained with patience for only an hour, for there are three types of hours: a gone hour, which the servant has spent in trouble or in pleasure; a coming one, which the servant does not know whether or not he would live until he catches; and a present hour in which he should strive his utmost and watches (the commandments of) his Lord Almighty. Thus, one should not have his hope in this world as long as, say, fifty years: on the contrary, he should live is present time as if he is in his last breaths, for it may be so and he does not know. If it is to be really his last breath, he should spend it in a way he does not dislike that death should approach him on it.

Let all his states be the same as narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "A faithful believer should not be on journey except in three cases: to get provision for a place of return, to sustain his living, or to take pleasure in what is not unlawful." (Ahmad, Ibn Hibban and Al-Hakim). It is further narrated that he "peace be upon him" said in the same Hadith: "A rational one should have only four hours: an hour in which he talks privately to his Lord, an hour in which he reckons himself, an hour in which he meditates on the making of Allah Almighty, and an hour in which he devotes himself to get food and drink." This hour helps him spend the other hours.

Moreover, even in the hour in which one devotes himself to food and drink, he should persist in doing the best of deeds, i.e. the remembrance of Allah

Almighty, and meditation on His wonders. Every kind of food has of wonders and marvels that which, if one thinks about, it would be much better than a lot of deeds to be done by organs. In this respect, the people are of many divisions:

some of them meditate that with the eye of consideration and contemplation; and that is the station of those endued with sound minds. Others look at that with the eye of displeasure and aversion, and observe how they are forced to it, and hope to dispense with it, but they find themselves oppressed by necessity to be in need of it, and subjugated to their desires in it. That is the station of the ascetic. Some try to see the Maker in the making, from which they upgrade to the attributes of the Creator, and the contemplation of that is a means to remember gates of thoughts and revelations to be opened for them; and that is the highest station. It is one of the stations of the Gnostics and signs of lovers (for Allah Almighty). A fourth division of people look at that with the eye of desire and greediness, thereupon they grieve for what they have lost of it, and rejoice at what they get of it, criticize what disagrees with their inclination and disposition of it, and consequently, criticize its maker, without knowing that the maker of all things is Allah Almighty, and by criticizing the making, they indeed criticize Him.

That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" when he said: "Abuse not the time, for Allah is the (creator and disposer of) time." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

That is the second station of keeping positioned, by permanent watching of deeds.

CHAPTER THREE
THIRD STATION: RECKONING SELF AFTER DOING THE DEED
Virtue Of Reckoning Self

Here, a mention may be made of the statement of Allah Almighty: " O you who believe! Fear Allah, and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow. Yea, fear Allah: For Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that you do." (Al-Hashr 18)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

That is a reference to reckoning on the previous deeds. Similar to that is the statement of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him": "Reckon yourselves (in this world) before you would be reckoned (in the hereafter), and weigh them before you would be weighed."

It is narrated that a man came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Advise me." He "peace be upon him" said: "Are you getting to act upon that advice?" he answered in the affirmative, thereupon he said to him: "If you intend to do a thing, then, consider first its resulting consequence: if it is right, then, implement it, otherwise, if it is error, desist from it."

In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: " And O you Believers! turn you all together towards Allah, that you may attain Bliss." (An-Nur 31)

﴿ وَتُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

Repentance is to consider the act after finishing from it and then show regrets for it. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I pray for forgiveness of Allah Almighty, and turn to Him in repentance one hundred times per day."

Allah Almighty further said: " Those who fear Allah, when a thought of evil from Satan assaults them, bring Allah to remembrance, when lo! they see (aright)!" (Al-A'raf 201)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْاْ إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَٰٓئِفٌ مِّنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ تَذَكَّرُواْ فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ ﴾

According to Maimun Ibn Muhran: "A man does not become one of the pious until he reckons himself stricter than he reckons his partner." Of a surety, both partners account each other after finishing from the deed.

It is narrated on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" said to her when he was at his last breaths: "None among the people is more beloved to me than Umar." Then he said to her: "What have I said?" She repeated to him what he had said, and then he resumed: "None among the people is dearer to me than Umar." Look how he considered his word after saying it and when he reflected it, he replaced it with another one.

Consider also the narration of Abu Talhah "Allah be pleased with him" when the bird distracted his mind in prayer thereupon he reflected the matter and made his garden an object of charity for the Sake of Allah Almighty in regret for his sin and expectation of the recompense for the good he had lost.

It is further related that Abdullah Ibn Salam "Allah be pleased with him" carried a bundle of fire wood, and when the people saw him they said to him: "O Abu Yusuf! Your slaves and sons might suffice you that burden!" on that he said: "I liked to try myself whether or not it would have aversion for that."

According to Al-Hassan "may Allah have mercy upon him": "The faithful believer always stands over himself to reckon him strictly; and the reckoning (in the hereafter) would be light on a people who reckon themselves in this world; and reckoning would be heavy on the Day of Judgement on a people who take this matter without reckoning."

It is narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: One day I set out in the company of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab until he entered a fenced garden and I heard him saying, and there was a wall between him and me: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the Commander of Believers! Bravo! Bravo! By Allah, you should fear Allah, otherwise, He will punish you."

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: " And I do call to witness the self-reproaching spirit; (eschew Evil)" (Al-Qiyamah 2)

﴿ وَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِٱلنَّفْسِ ٱللَّوَّامَةِ ﴾

Al-Hassan "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "The faithful believer ever blames himself: What I have intended by my word? What have I intended by my food? What have I intended by my drink? But the wicked always goes on without blaming himself."

According to Malik Ibn Dinar "may Allah have mercy upon him": "May Allah

have mercy on a servant who says to himself: 'Am I not the owner of such and such a thing?' Then, he criticizes and then reins himself and forces it to abide by the Book of Allah Almighty which becomes his guide."

According to Ibrahim At-Taimi "may Allah have mercy upon him": "I imagined myself in Paradise eating of its fruits, drinking of its rivers and embracing its virgin houris. Then, I imagined myself in the fire (of Hell) eating of its Zaqqum tree, drinking of its pus, and being bound in its chains and fetters. On that I said to myself: 'O soul! Which of both you like?' it said: 'I like to be sent back to the world in order to work righteousness.' I said to it: 'Then, now you are still in your wish: so, work righteousness.'"

According to Malik Ibn Dinar "may Allah have mercy upon him": I heard Al-Hajjaj saying in his sermon: "May Allah have mercy upon a man who reckons his own self by himself before its reckoning would be entrusted to another one than him. May Allah have mercy upon a man who takes lead of his deed in order to consider what he intend by it. May Allah have mercy upon a man who considers his measure. May Allah have mercy upon a man who regards his weight..." he went on saying as such until he caused me to weep.

Explication Of Real Nature Of Reckoning After Doing The Deed

It should be known to you that as well as there is a time in the beginning of the day in which a servant puts conditions on himself by way of advising it, there should also be a time in the end of the day in which he demands the soul and reckons it for every movement and act it has done during the day, just like the traders, along the entire world, do with their partners in the end of every year, month, week or day. If they do so in the perishable worldly matters for fear they would lose anything of it, then, how should one not do so concerning his destiny which leads him to the permanent never-ending happiness or wretchedness? His indulgence in doing so results from heedlessness and lack of success and felicity: We seek refuge with Allah from heedlessness.

Reckoning with one's partner is to review the capital and the resulting increase or decrease, in order to know and distinguish profit from loss. If there is a profit, he would take it and give thanks to him; and if there is loss, he would demand him for surety and obligate him to amend it in the future. Similarly, the servant's capital in his religion is the obligatory duties, his profit results from supererogatory and excellent deeds, and his loss results from sins. The season of this trade is the whole duration of the day, and his partner is his soul which orders him to do evil:

First of all, he should reckon it on the obligatory duties: if he has fulfilled them perfectly, he would thank Allah Almighty for it, and exhort it to do the like of them; and if he has missed all or some of them, he would demand it to compensate the missed ones; and if he has fulfilled them imperfectly, he would obligate it to complete them with the supererogatory deeds; and if he has committed a sin, he would engage in punishing and mortifying it in order to take from it what he makes up therewith the things in which he has indulged. The same applies to every movement and act he does like his vision, passing thoughts, sitting, standing, eating, drinking, sleeping and even his silence.

Furthermore, one should reckon his own self for the entire lifetime day by day and hour by hour, concerning all of his external and internal organs, and even his breaths. Were one to put a stone in his house for every sin he commits daily, surely, his house would be filled with stones so much along a short time of his life. But unfortunately, one indulges in making a record of sins, nothing of which, anyway, is missed by the angels who record everything on him and keep it in the account of his deeds.

It is narrated that Tawbah Ibn As-Summah, who lived in Raqqah, used to reckon himself severely day by day. He accounted one day and behold! He found out that he was sixty years old. By accounting their days, he found out that they were twenty-one thousand and five hundred days. On that he cried saying: "Woe to me! Should I meet the Sovereign with nearly twenty-one thousand sins? How should it be then given that everyday there are more than ten thousand sins?" he fell unconscious, and behold! He died. Immediately, they heard a voice saying: "How good lying it is that leads directly to the highest Paradise!"

As such one should reckon his own soul relentlessly.

CHAPTER FOUR

FOURTH STATION: PUNISHING SELF

Whatever one reckons himself, it could hardly be free from committing sins and mistakes. For this reason, one should not neglect it. If he neglects it, it would be too easy on him to commit sins. He then should punish it. For example, if he eats a morsel of food whose source is suspicious with greed, he should then punish his abdomen by giving it to hunger; and if he looks at the unlawful, he should punish the eye by preventing it from looking at anything entirely. The same applies to punishing any organ and part of his body, in case it commits indulgence, by preventing it from its own desire and appetence. That was the habit of the travelers on the path to the hereafter.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibrahim Ibn Mansur that a worshipper talked to a woman (who was unlawful for him) and he continued to talk to her until he put his hand over her thigh. But he regretted and (to punish himself for that) he placed his hand into the fire until it got stiff.

It is further narrated that from among the children of Israel, there was a man who worshipped Allah in his hermitage for a long time. Once, he looked from the window of his hermitage and behold! There was a fascinating woman who attracted him. He intended to come out to her (to have sexual relation with her), and once he got out his foot to descend to her, Allah rescued him by reminding him of his previous good deeds. He said to himself: "What is that which I intend to do?" He restored his right direction and Allah Almighty protected him from that sin. When he intended to return his foot to the hermitage he said to himself: "How far! How far! How could a leg that has come out with the intention to disobey Allah return to my hermitage once again? That would never be." He left it hung outside the hermitage, exposed to sun, rain, frost and wind until it tore to pieces and then fell down. Allah Almighty appreciated for him that conduct, and revealed his mention in one of His Scriptures.

It is related that both Ghazwan and Abu Musa "Allah be pleased with them" were in a holy battle when a girl was exposed and Ghazwan looked at her (lustfully). Showing regret for his doing, he raised his hand therewith he slapped his eye until he gouged it out. He said to it: "You peep into what causes harm to you."

It is narrated from one of those righteous that he looked only once at a woman (lustfully), thereupon he made it binding upon himself, (by way of punishment) not to drink the cold water along his lifetime, and rather he kept drinking the hot water in order to embitter his life on himself.

It is narrated from Hassan Ibn Abu Sinan that he passed by a chamber and then asked himself: "When has this been built?" then he turned to himself and said to it: "How do you ask about what concerns you not? By Allah, I would punish you by observing fasts for a whole year." He then observed fasts for a whole year consecutively."

It is further related from Tamim Ad-Dari "Allah be pleased with him" that he slept one night and failed to stand for Tahajjud prayer. In order to punish himself for his indulgence, he kept standing in prayer for the whole night everyday for a complete year.

It is narrated on the authority of Talhah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: One day, a man rushed in the street and put off his garment and rolled himself in the scorching sand, saying to himself: "Taste (the scorching heat), given that the fire of Hell is more sweltering." Such being the case, he saw the Prophet "peace be upon him" under the shade of a tree, thereupon he came to him and said: "My self has overpowered me." The Prophet "peace be upon him" said to him: "Was it necessary for you to do what you had done? Behold! The gates of the heaven were opened to you, and Allah Almighty showed pride to the angels because of you." Then he said to his companions: "Take provision from your brother." They went on saying to him, one after the other: "O so and so! Invoke good upon me." The Prophet "peace be upon him" asked him to comprehend them all in invocation, thereupon he said: "O Allah! Make piety their provision, and unite their decision on guidance." The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "O Allah! Grant him success." The man said: "O Allah! Make Paradise their returning place." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya)

Hudhaifah Ibn Qatadah "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: It was said to a man: "How do you do with yourself concerning its desires?" he said: "Nothing on the surface of the earth is more hateful to me than it. Then, how should I fulfill for it its desires?"

Ibn As-Sammak entered upon Dawud At-Ta'i "may Allah have mercy upon him" when he died, and his dead body was lying on the ground. On that he said to him: "O Dawud! You have imprisoned yourself (in this world) before you would be put to prison and punished yourself before you would be punished (on the Day of Judgement); and today you would get the reward of Him for Whom you worked."

Wahb Ibn Munabbih said: There was a man who worshipped Allah for a long time, and then he seemed to have a need from Allah Almighty. He stood

(in prayer) for seventy Saturdays, on each of which he ate only eleven dates and then asked Allah Almighty for his need, but it was not given to him. Then, he returned to himself and said to it: "It is from you that I was put to affliction. Had there been good in you, surely, you would have been given your need." Then, an angel descended to him and said: "O man! This hour of yours is much better than your whole previous worship; and Allah Almighty has fulfilled your need."

Abdullah Ibn Qais said: "We were in a holy battle when the enemy faced us, and a cry was made to the people who, in turn, stood to the fighting on a very windy day. Behold! There was a man in front of me, and he was saying to himself: "O my soul! Have I attended such and such a battle and you said to me 'Guard yourself for the sake of your family and children', and I obeyed you and returned? Has the same not occurred in another battle? By Allah, on that day I would oppose you, and it is incumbent upon Allah to take away or leave you." I (the narrator) said to myself): "Let me peep at him to day in order to see what he would do." When the people attacked their enemy, he was among the first of them. When the enemy launched an opposing attack against us, and we were exposed, he was steadfast and remained firm in his place and persisted in fighting until he was killed in the end of the day. I counted over sixty wounds in his body and his riding mount."

There are a lot of examples for such punishment as therewith those of resolute power used to punish themselves whenever they committed sins or fell in mistakes. Wonder at you when you punish your slave, slave-girl, child, and their like when they err or sin for fear that if you indulge in punishing them, they might transgress against you. But at the same time, you neglect to punish your own self when you err or sin, given that it is the greatest enemy to and the most transgressing against you, and the harm you receive from its transgression against you is more than that you receive from the transgression of anyone of your children or slaves against you. Their final end is to distract the living of this world upon you, and were you to know, you would learn, with certainty, that the real good, and never-ending permanent bliss lie in the living of the hereafter; and it is your own self which embitters on you the living of the hereafter. That is why it is worthier of punishment than anyone else.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIFTH STATION: SELF-MORTIFICATION

When one reckons his own self and finds that it has sinned or erred, he should punish it with the previous punishments. But if he sees that it slows down, out of laziness, to do anyone of the excellent deeds or devotional recitals, he should discipline it, by giving it heavy religious assignments, and force it to adhere to a lot of religious duties and tasks, perchance he would compensate what he has missed. That was the custom of the righteous workers of Allah Almighty.

As such Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" punished himself when he missed the Asr prayer in congregation: He gave in charity a piece of land belonging to him priced at two hundred thousand Dirhams. It was the habit of

Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that whenever he missed an obligatory prayer in congregation, he would stand in prayer during the whole of that night. One night, he delayed offering Maghrib prayer until two stars appeared, thereupon he emancipated two slaves. On another occasion, Ibn Abu Rabie'ah missed the two-rak'ah prayer (to be offered before) Fajr, thereupon he emancipated a slave.

Some of them used to make it binding upon himself, by way of punishment, to observe fasts for a whole year consecutively or to set out on journey for Hajj on foot, or to give in charity the whole of his property. All of this was in order to keep the soul steadfastly stationed, and punish it with what saves it.

You may say: "My soul does not agree with me to be involved in that mortification and those devotional recitals regularly: then, what is the way to deal with it?" in reply to that, let me tell you that the way to do so is to listen to what is reported in the traditions about the excellence of self-mortification:

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-As "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, who stands for prayer by night with even ten Holy Verses, will not be enrolled among the heedless; and he who stands for prayer by night with one hundred Holy Verses will be enrolled among the devout; and he who stands for prayer by night with one thousand Holy Verses will be enrolled among the highest (assembly of) worshippers." (Abu Dawud)

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah's Mercy be upon a man who gets up at night, offers (supererogatory) prayer, and awakens his wife and she offers prayer, and if she refuses, he sprinkles water over her face; and Allah's Mercy be upon a woman who gets up at night, offers (supererogatory) prayer, and awakens her husband and he offers prayer, and if he refuses, she sprinkles water over his face." (Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Stick to standing at night (to offer supererogatory prayers), since it was the practice of the previous righteous before you." (At-Tirmidhi).

Among the best ways besides to treat it is to get the company of one of the servants of Allah Almighty who strives his utmost in worship, and take him as an example to follow. But this way of treatment now has become difficult for you could hardly find such as strives his utmost in worship in the same way as the previous ones did. So, one should turn from seeing to hearing, for nothing nowadays benefits more than hearing their news and knowing their states and traditions. Although their trouble was over (as they died) their reward and bliss remain perpetually and ceaselessly. How great is their dominion, and how sorry are those who do not imitate them!

Let us here relate of the attributes and good merits of those who strive their utmost in worship, in order for the novice on the path to Allah might be moved by desire to strive his utmost in imitation of them.

The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Allah's mercy be upon a people who seem sick (because of worship), although they are not sick." (Ahmad). According to Al-Hassan: "It is worship which fatigues them."

Allah Almighty said: " And those who dispense their charity with their hearts full of fear, because they will return to their Lord." (Al-Mu'minun 60)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَآ ءَاتَوا۟ وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴾

According to Al-Hassan: "They do what they do of the deeds of righteousness, and at the same time fear that this might not deliver them from the punishment of Allah Almighty."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Blessed be he who lives long and his deed is good." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Bishr).

It is narrated that Allah Almighty says to His angels: "What is the matter with My servants that they strive their utmost (in worship)?" they say: "O our God! You fairly frightened them of something which they came to fear, and attracted them to something for which they came to have longing." On that Allah, the Exalted and the Blessed says: "Then, how would they be if My servants see Me? Of a surety, they would strive their utmost more and more."

Al-Hassan Al-Basri "may Allah have mercy upon him" said: "I have caught a people and accompanied many of them, and they neither rejoiced at anything of this world they received, nor grieved for anything of it they lost, for it was, in their sight, more trivial than this earth which you trample. Anyone of them happened to have no more than a single garment along his entire life, nor did he ever order his wife to cook food for him, nor did he ever make anything between his body and the earth. At the same time, I caught them and they acted upon the (principles and teachings of the) Book of their Lord and the sunnah of their Prophet "peace be upon him": whenever night fell upon them, they would stand on their toes (in prayer) and spread their faces on the ground (in prostration), with their tears flowing over their cheeks, talking privately to their Lord Almighty in the hope of being released (from His punishment). If they did a good deed, they would rejoice at it, give thanks to Allah for it, and ask Him to accept it from them; and if they committed a misdeed, it would aggrieve them, and they would ask Allah Almighty to forgive it for them. By Allah, they remained as such and on the same state; and by Allah, they were neither completely free from sins, nor saved but by forgiveness."

The wife of Masruq said about him: "He was not seen but with his legs swollen because of the long times he used to spend in prayer. By Allah, I many times sat behind him, weeping out of pity for him."

According to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him": "Had it not been for three things, I would not have liked to live in this world even for a single moment: To be thirsty for the Sake of Allah at the very noon when it is very hot; to fall in prostration to Allah in the middle of the night; and to sit with people who pick up the most pleasant of words, in the same way as the most pleasant of fruits are picked up."

It is related that Al-Aswad Ibn Yazid used to strive his utmost in worship: he

observed fasts during the scorching heat until his body would turn green and pale. Alqamah Ibn Qais said to him: "Why do you punish yourself as such?" he replied to him: "It is its dignity which I intend thereby." He used to observe fasts so much until his body would turn pale and to offer prayer for a long time until he would fall down out of tiredness. Both Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him" and Al-Hassan "may Allah have mercy upon him" entered to visit him and inquire about his health and said to him: "Indeed, Allah Almighty did not order you to do all of this." He said to them: "I am but a slave owned (by Allah), and so I never leave anything leading to submissiveness but that I do it."

It is narrated from one of those righteous that he used to pray one thousand rak'ahs everyday until he became paralyzed. But he continued to pray the same one thousand rak'ahs everyday as sitting. Whenever he offered Asr prayer he would move crawling, and then say: "I wonder at the creatures: how do they like a substitute for You? I wonder at the creatures: how do they become affable with anything else other than You? I wonder at the creatures: how do their hearts seek light with remembrance of anyone other than You?"

It is said about Thabit Al-Bunani "may Allah have mercy upon him" that prayer was endeared to him, thereupon he said: "O Allah! If You are to permit anyone to pray in his grave, then, permit me to pray in my grave."

According to Al-Junaid: "I have never seen one more devoted to worship than As-Sari "may Allah have mercy upon him": Ninety-eight years came upon him, during which he was never seen lying except in his fatal illness."

According to Al-Harith Ibn Sa'd: Some people came upon a monk and saw how he strove his utmost extremely in worship. They talked to him about that and he said: "What is that to do when people are doomed to face terrors while they are heedless? They indeed dedicated themselves to their own fortunes from this world, and forgot their greater fortune from their Lord." On that all the people who were present went on weeping.

Abu Muhammad Al-Maghazili said: Abu Muhammad Al-Jariri spent a year in the neighbourhood of the Ka'bah in Mecca during which he never slept, nor spoke, nor even reclined his back against a pillar, nor stretched his legs. Such being the case, Abu Bakr Al-Kittani passed by him and saluted him. he asked him: "O Abu Muhammad! By which thing have you the power to spend that period in seclusion?" He said: "He (Allah) learnt my true secret, thereupon He helped me against my outward conduct." Al-Kittani lowered his head and turned away and was given to deep reflection.

According to Thabit Al-Bunani: "I caught a people anyone of whom used to offer (supererogatory) prayer so long that after prayer he would not be able to go to bed except as crawling."

It was said that Abu Bakr Ibn Ayyash spent forty years during which he never lay his side on the ground; and one of his eyes got troubled and his family did not know about it for twenty years.

It also was said that the devotional recital of Samnun was the prayer of five hundred rak'ahs everyday.

It was said to Abdullah Ibn Amir: "How could you persevere on the

sleeplessness at night and thirst at the scorching noon?" He said: "It is nothing except that I have turned the food of the day to the night, and the sleep of the night to the day; and that is of no significance."

It is narrated on the authority of one of the companions of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I offered Fajr prayer behind Ali Ibn Abu Talib and when he concluded the prayer with the end salutation (Taslim), he turned away towards his right side and the signs of gloominess were visible on his face. He stayed as such until sun rose thereupon he turned his hand and said: "I saw the companions of Muhammad "peace be upon him", and by Allah I do not see today anyone like them. Whenever morning came upon them, they would be unkempt and pale, and covered with dust for they had spent the night in prostration and standing in prayer for the Sake of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah, and changing between their feet and foreheads; and whenever they remembered Allah, they would bend in the same way as the trees bend on a windy day, and their eyes would overflow with tears so much until their garments would be wetted. But it seems that those people (who were present with him when he said so) spent the night heedless."

It is further related that Abu Muslim Al-Khawlani hung a whip in the mosque of his house to frighten himself therewith. He used to say to himself: "Stand up, and by Allah, I would proceed on with you (in worship) until you and not I would get tired." But whenever he wearied, he would take hold of his whip and lash his leg with it saying: "You are worthier of beating than my riding mount." He used to say: "Do the companions of Muhammad "peace be upon him" think that they would take him for themselves on the exclusion of us? No, by Allah, we would contest them over him until they know that they left good successors after them."

It is further narrated that Safwan Ibn Sulaim had his legs twisted in view of his standing in prayer for a long time. He died while he was prostrating. He used to say: "O Allah! I like meeting You, so, like meeting me."

It is narrated on the authority of Al-Qasim Ibn Muhammad that he said: "Whenever I came out early in the morning everyday, I would go first to A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" to pay her salutation. One day I went to her and found her offering Duha prayer and reading while weeping: "But Allah has been good to us, and has delivered us from the Penalty of the Scorching Wind." (At-Tur 27)

﴿ فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَىٰنَا عَذَابَ ٱلسَّمُومِ ﴾

She also went on supplicating, repeating and imploring and I kept standing for a long time and she remained in the same state. Saw that, I suggested to myself to go to the market and finish from my needs and then return to her. When I finished from my needs and returned to her, she was still in the same state of repeating the Holy Verse and supplicating and weeping."

According to a righteous predecessor: "I do not feel afraid of death except that it would impede me from standing at night (in prayer and remembrance)."

According to Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him": "The sign of the righteous is the paleness because of spending the night wakeful, bleary-eyedness

because of weeping so much, and dryness of lips because of observing fasts, and they also have the dust color of the submissive."

It was said to Al-Hassan "may Allah have mercy upon him": "What is the matter with those who offer Tahajjud prayer at night that they are the most good-looking among the people?" he said: "That is because they stay in seclusion with (Allah) the Most Gracious, thereupon He dresses them in the dress of His light."

According to Ja'far Ibn Muhammad: "Utbah Al-Ghulam used to interrupt the night with three cries: whenever he offered Isha' prayer, he would place his head in between his knees and go in meditation. When one-third the night elapsed, he would make a cry, and then place his head in between his knees and go on meditation. When two-thirds the night elapsed, he would make another cry, and then place his head in between his knees and go on meditation until when it was a short while before dawn, he would make a third cry. I related that to one of the inhabitants of Basrah who said: "Do not care about his cry, but rather about the state in which he is in the interval between the cries until he cries."

According to a wise man: "Allah Almighty has servants upon whom He confers favors thereupon they know Him, and expands their breasts thereupon they obey him and rely on Him in all of their affairs. Their hearts thus have become metals of pure certainty (of faith), containers of good wisdom, chests of grandeur, and stores of power. Although they seem to go and return among the people, their hearts tour in the dominion of the invisibles and take shelter in the unseen, and return with indescribable subtleties of benefits. Inwardly they are like good brocade, and outwardly like torn-out handkerchiefs. This rank could hardly be attained by ostentation, but it is the bounty of Allah Almighty which He gives to such as He pleases."

It is related by one of the righteous that he said: "While I was walking in between the mountains of Jerusalem, I descended to a valley and behold! There was a high voice that is responded to by those mountains. I followed the voice and behold! I became in the middle of a garden with clusters of trees, and there was a man standing, reciting repeatedly the following statement of Allah: " On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done, and all the evil it has done, it will wish there were a great distance between it and its evil. But Allah cautions you (to remember) Himself. And Allah is full of kindness to those that serve Him." (Al Imran 30)

﴿ يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِن سُوٓءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُۥٓ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسَهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ رَءُوفٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

I sat behind him listening to him while he was repeating that Holy Verse after which he cried so high that he fell unconscious. An hour later he restored his consciousness and then I heard him saying: "I seek refuge with You O Allah from the rank of the liars. I seek refuge with You O Allah form the deeds of the false. I seek refuge with You O Allah from the deviation of the heedless (from the truth). To You the hearts of the fearful are submissive, the hopes of the indulgent aspire, and to Your grandeur the hearts of the Gnostics are humiliated."

Then, he shook off his hands and said: "What do I have to do with this world, and what does this world have to do with me?" I called him: "O servant of Allah! I have been sitting behind you, in expectation for your leisure." On that he said: "How could one have leisure who races the time for fear death might hasten to overtake him? how could one have a leisure whose days have gone by and only his sins remain?" then he resumed: "You are fitting for it and for every adversity I expect." Then, he was engaged from me for an hour after which he recited: "Even if the wrong-doers had all that there is on earth, and as much more, (in vain) would they offer it for ransom from the pain of the Penalty on the Day of Judgment: but something will confront them from Allah, which they could never have counted upon!" (Az-Zumar 47)

﴿ وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهِ مِن سُوءِ الْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ
وَبَدَا لَهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ ﴾

Then, he made a loud cry after which he fell unconscious and I thought he died. But when I came close to him and checked his body, I found him still breathing. When he recovered he said: "Who am I? Grant me pardon for my misdeed out of Your bounty and cover me with Your covering, forgive for my sin with Your Bounteous Countenance when I stand in front of You." I said to him: "I beseech you by Him Whom you expect for yourself and confide, to talk to me." He said to me: "I advise you to stick to the speech of Him Who benefits you, and leave the speech of him whom sins have destroyed. I have been in that place since Allah Almighty willed, struggling Iblis, who have not found an aid to divert me from what I have been in except for you. So, leave me, O deceived man: You have made idle my tongue and caused a part of my heart to incline to your speech. I seek refuge with Allah form your evil, and I expect to grant me refuge from His displeasure and confer from His mercy upon me." I then said to myself: "That might be an ally of Allah Almighty and I fear to engage him and incur punishment upon myself in this very place." I turned away and left him."

It is related that Karz Ibn Wabarah used to recite the Holy Qur'an in full thrice everyday and mortify himself in the acts of worship. It was said to him: "You have troubled yourself so much." He said: "What is the term of this world?" It was said: "Seven thousand years." He further asked: "What is the term of the Day of Judgement?" it was said: "Fifty thousand years." On that he said: "Then, how should anyone of you fail to do even one-seventh that Day and, at the same time, like to feel safe (from its punishment)?".

As such was the conduct of the righteous predecessors in keeping stationed and watching their own souls. So, whenever your own self rebels against you and fails to be regular on the acts of worship, at least consider the states of those righteous, for the like of them now are very rare. If you could see such of people as imitate them, it would be more effective on the heart, and more ready to stimulate you to follow them. Of a surety, the story, no matter impressive it might be, is not like the vision with the eye. If you fail to see such of people as imitate them, do not indulge in listening to the narrations about the states of the righteous predecessors. Then, give yourself the freedom to choose to imitate

them and they are the best rational and religious, or to follow the ignorant heedless among the people of your own time. If you think within yourself that those are too strong for anyone to imitate, then, consider the states of the striving women and encourage your own self to disdain to be less in rank than those righteous women:

It is narrated from Habibah Al-Adawiyyah that whenever she offered Isha' prayer, she would go up to the surface of her house after straightening her veil and headcover over her body and say: "O my God! The stars now have got sunken, eyes shut down because people have slept, and gates of houses closed, and every lover has become in seclusion with his/her beloved; and that is my standing in front of You." Then she would devote herself to prayer until when dawn rose she would say: "O my God! That night has gone away, and the morning has become bright: by my life: Have You accepted from me my (standing in prayer and supplication for You at that) night so that I would be pleased and get comforted, or rejected it from me so that I would grieve? By Your Honor: That would be my practice as long as You leave me in this world. By Your Honor: even if You drive me away from Your gate, I would not leave, for Your generosity and Bounty I am certain of."

It is further narrated that Ajzah, and she was blind, used to spend the whole night every night in prayer and remembrance. Whenever it was a short while before dawn, she would call with a sad voice: "O my God! To You worshippers have cut the darkness of nights, in a race among each other to Your mercy and the bounty of Your forgiveness. With You O my God, and not with anyone else, I ask You to make me in the first group of the forerunners (to the Garden), elevate me up to Your presence in Illiyyin, place me in the rank of these close to You, and join me with Your righteous servants: You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy, the Grandest of those who are grand, and the Most Generous of those who are generous: O Most Generous!" then, she would fall in prostration and keep supplicating and weeping until dawn.

According to Muhammad Ibn Mu'adh: A worshipping woman told me: I saw in a dream as if I was admitted to Paradise, and behold! The inhabitants of Paradise were standing at their gates. I asked: "What is the matter with the inhabitants of Paradise that they are standing at their gates?" It was said to me: "They have come out to look at a woman who adorned the gardens of Paradise with her arrival." When I asked about her it was said to me: "She is a black slave-girl from the women of the Tree called Sha'wanah." I said: "That is my sister (in religion of Allah)." Such being the case, she was brought on a flying female horse. When I saw her I called her: "O my sister! Do you not see my position from you? Would you not invoke Allah for me to join me with you?" She smiled and said: "It is not time for your arrival here. But anyway, learn (and abide by) two things from me: Make grief abide in your heart, and give priority to the love for Allah over your inclination; and once you do so, death will harm you not whenever you die."

According to Abdullah Ibn Al-Hassan: "I had a Roman slave-girl of whom I

was very fond. She was sleeping beside me one night and when I got up I did not find her sleeping in the bed. I searched for her and behold! She was falling in prostration and saying: "O my God! I swear by Your love for me to forgive for me my sins." I said to her: "Do not say 'by Your love for me' but rather say 'By my love for You'." She said: "O master! By His love for me, he Has turned me out from polytheism to Islam, and by His love for me he made me get up (to remember Him) at night while a lot of people are sleeping."

It was the habit of Mu'adhah Al-Adawiyyah that whenever day came upon her, she would say: "That is the very day on which I would die." Then, she would not have food until night; and when night came upon her she would say: "That is the very night on which I would die." Then, she would remain in prayer and remembrance until morning.

According to Ad-Darani: I spent one night in the house of Rabi'ah Al-Adawiyyah, and then she stood (to offer prayer) in a Mihrab she had and I also stood (to offer prayer) in one corner of the house. She kept standing (in prayer and remembrance) until a short while before dawn. I asked: "What is the reward of he who has given us power to stand (in prayer) that night?" She said: "To observe fast for Him tomorrow."

Sha'wanah used to say in her supplication: "O my God! How longing I am to Your meeting, and how great is my hope in Your reward. You are the Most Generous with Whom the hope of the hopeful never fails, nor does cease the longing of those who have longing. O my God! If my appointed term has become near and nothing of my deeds have brought me close to You, I then have made the confession of my sins the means to justification. If You forgive for me, then, who is worthier than You to do so? And if you punish me, then, who is worthier than You of justice in this respect? O my God! I have wronged myself in looking at it and it remains only Your looking at it (with mercy): so, woe to it if You do not make it happy. O my God! You have been still munificent to me along all days of my lifetime, so, do not withhold Your munificence from me after my death. I hope that He Who has taken care of me during my life with His goodness to relieve me after my death with His forgiveness. O my God! How should I despair of Your good vision after my death given that You have conferred upon me but good favors during my life? O my God! If my sins have frightened me, then, my love for You has given me shelter. O my God! Had You wanted to put me to humiliation, You would not have guided me aright; and had You wanted to put me to shame, You would not have screened me: so, let me enjoy of that to which You have guided me, and make permanent for me that with which You have screened me. O my God! I do not think You would reject my need in which I have consumed my lifetime. O my God! But for the sins I have committed, I would never fear Your punishment; and but for Your generosity I know well, I would never hope in Your reward."

CHAPTER SIX

SIXTH STATION: SELF REPROACHING AND BLAMING

It should be known to you that your greatest enemy is your own self. It was

predisposed to enjoin evil and flee from good; and you have been commanded to justify and straighten it and bind it with the chains of oppression to abide by the worship of its Lord, and prevent it from its desires and wean it from its pleasures. If you neglect it, it would deviate and rebel against you and you would not be able to have control over it once again. But if you keep constant blaming and reproaching of it, your own self then would be the self-reproaching by which Allah Almighty took oath, and is expected to be the reassured self, that is invited to become one of the righteous well-pleased and pleasing servants of Allah Almighty.

It is said in this respect: "Be not heedless of reminding your own self (of Allah) and blaming it (for its evil) even for a single hour, and engage not in instructing others unless you engage first in instructing your own self."

It is related that Allah Almighty revealed to Jesus "peace be upon him": "O son of Mary! Instruct your own self first before you instruct the people! Behold! Feel shy of Me."

In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: "But teach (your Message): for teaching benefits the Believers." (Adh-Dhariyat 55)

﴿ وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ تَنفَعُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾

Your way to do so is to turn to it, and show to it its ignorance and foolishness. It disdains so much whenever it is attributed to foolishness. You should also remind it of the state of heedlessness in which it is, of Paradise and Hell to either of which it would inevitably be destined to go, and of the fact that death always comes unexpectedly, for which it should get ready at any moment, asking it to consider the following statement of Allah Almighty: "Closer and closer to mankind comes their Reckoning: yet they heed not and they turn away. Never comes (aught) to them of a renewed Message from their Lord, but they listen to it as in jest." (Al-Anbiya 1-2)

﴿ ٱقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِى غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿١﴾ مَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِم مُّحْدَثٍ إِلَّا ٱسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

Send woes upon it saying:

"Woe to you O self! If you do evil thinking that your Lord never sees you, then, how disbelieving are you! But if you do evil in spite of your awareness of the fact that He sees you, then, how daring and rude are you! Woe to you! If anyone of the servants does with you what you dislike, how angry would you be with him: then, how do you dare to expose yourself to the anger, wrath, displeasure and punishment of Allah Almighty? How could you endure His punishment? do you deceive yourself with your reliance on the generosity and bounty of Allah Almighty, and His needlessness of your worship and obedience? Why do you not rely on the generosity and bounty of Allah Almighty in your worldly affairs? If you are troubled by a worldly desire which you need to fulfill with money, why do you strive your utmost to obtain it, without reliance on the generosity of Allah? Do you think that Allah Almighty is generous in the hereafter and not in the world? Of course you know that the

established way of Allah Almighty never changes, and that the Lord of the world and hereafter is the same One Lord, and man would not earn but the fruit of his work.

Woe to you O self! What a great hypocrite you are! You claim faith, although the trace of hypocrisy is visible on you. Allah Almighty said: "There is no moving creature on earth but its sustenance depends on Allah: He knows the time and place of its definite abode and its temporary deposit: All is in a clear Record." (Hud 6)

﴿ ۞ وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا ۚ كُلٌّ فِى كِتَـٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

That is in connection with this world. As for the hereafter, He Almighty said: " That man can have nothing but what he strives for." (An-Najm 39)

﴿ وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَـٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ ﴾

In this way, He ensured to you your worldly affairs, and satisfied you from striving in it. But you have belied Him by your deeds, and come to compete for it. On the other hand, He entrusted the hereafter affairs to your striving, but you turned from it as deceived and conceited. That is not characteristic of faith. If faith depends only on the tongue, then, why would the hypocrites be in the lowest bottom of the fire?

Woe to you O soul! What is the matter with you that you do not believe in the Day of Reckoning? If that is your faith, then how disbelieving and ignorant are you! Do you give lie to the statement of Allah Almighty: " From a sperm-drop: He has created him, and then moulds him in due proportions; Then does He make his path smooth for him; Then He causes him to die, and putts him in his Grave; Then, when it is His Will, He will raise him up (again)." (Abasa 19-22)

﴿ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُۥ فَقَدَّرَهُۥ ﴿١٩﴾ ثُمَّ ٱلسَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُۥ ﴿٢٠﴾ ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُۥ فَأَقْبَرَهُۥ ﴿٢١﴾ ثُمَّ إِذَا شَآءَ أَنشَرَهُۥ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

If you do not give lie to that, then, why do you not take your precaution? If you O self knows all of this, then, why do you postpone your work in this world given that death awaits to snatch you away at any time and without respite? By what consideration do you feel safe from death to be hastened on to you?

I do not think you slacken to take consideration but for one of two things: hidden disbelief or apparent foolishness. As for the hidden disbelief, it is your weak faith in the Day of Reckoning, and lacking knowledge of the great significance of reward and punishment. as for your apparent foolishness, it is your reliance on Allah's generosity and forgiveness, without turning to His plan and scheme, and needlessness of your worship, although you do not rely on His generosity in a morsel of food or a grain of money, or a single word you hear from the people. Nay! You fulfill your purpose in those worldly affairs using all tricks and ways available to you.

Do you not know, O self, that this world is the abode of the Sovereign of all kings, and what you have in it is not really yours? Do you not know that whatever you have in this world, you would inevitably leave by death? In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be

upon him", the chief of all Messengers and Prophets, said: "(Gabriel) the Holy Spirit inspired to me that it is the same for you to love whomever you love, for you are going to leave him; and it is the same for you to do what you like, for you would be rewarded for it; and it is the same for you to live as you will, for you would necessarily die."

Woe to you! Do you not know that whoever takes much pleasures in this world indeed increases his grief and detrimental poison at death where he feels not? Do you not consider those who were before you, how they built and raised their constructions and then went away and left what they had done, and how Allah Almighty make their enemies inherit their land and property? Do you not see how they gather what they eat not, build what they live not, and hope what they realize not? Anyone of them inhabits his world although he should inevitably leave it, and at the same time destroys his hereafter to which he should necessarily go. Do you not feel shy, O self, to help those in their foolishness? Suppose you are not insightful, and rather inclined, by disposition and nature, to imitation and emulation, then, at least, choose whomever you should imitate: Make comparison between the minds of the Prophets, scholars and wise men and the minds of those who turn over this world.

O self! It may be that the love for majesty and authority has intoxicated you from perceiving the real nature of those facts. But even, do you not know that majesty itself disappears by the disappearance of you as well as of those who obey you? How then should you sell the perishable for the never-ending? If you do not leave this world out of desire for the hereafter, due to your ignorance and blindness, at least, leave it out of refraining from your despicable partners in it. Why do you not abstain in its little given that its much discards you? Why do you rejoice at a world in which Jews and Christians might precede you to its pleasures and ornaments? Woe to a world in which those despicable people precede you! How ignorant and foolish are you, since you reject to be one of these close to Allah, from among the Prophets, martyrs, and sincere affirmers and lovers of truth, in the neighbourhood of Allah the Lord of the world, in order to be among the foolish and ignorant. What sorrow if you lose both the world and religion, then, you should hasten.

Woe to you O self! You now have become on the threshold of death: Who is it that would pray, fast or even give in charity on behalf of you after death? Woe to you! You have only a limited number of days in this world, which are your goods, and you have wasted the most part of it: If you keep weeping for the rest of your lifetime for what you have wasted of it, you would still run short of fulfillment. It should be known to you that death is your appointed term, grave is your abode, dust is your bed, worms are your companions in it, the great terror is ahead of you, and the soldiers of death are awaiting your soul to come out and leave your body. Do you not know that anyone after death hopes to return to this world even for a single day in order to compensate what he wasted in it? If you are to sell to anyone of them a single day of your lifetime for his entire world, he would buy it with good pleasure.

Woe to you! You always adorn your outward to the people and challenge

Allah Almighty in your secret. Do you feel shy of the creatures and not of the Creator? Do you enjoin good upon the people while you are stained with vices? Do you invite to Allah and you flee away from Him, and remind others of Him and you forget Him? do you not know that the sinful is more stinking than the dung, and the dung never purifies anything else? So, why do you covet of purifying others and you are not pure in yourself?

Woe to you! You have made yourself a donkey of Iblis to lead you wherever and however he likes. But even, you are fond of your deed which is full of mistakes and errors. Allah Almighty cursed Iblis for a single mistake after he had worshipped Him for two hundred thousand years; and drove Adam out of the Garden only for a single mistake although he is His Prophet.

Woe to you O self! You devote yourself to a world that is leaving you, and turning away from the hereafter which is coming to you. How many a man receives his day and does not complete it, and how many a man hopes in the morrow which he does not realize! Remember a day when Allah Almighty would not leave a servant, whom He ordered to do good and forbade to do evil, without questioning him about his deed, its significant and insignificant, its secret and public. Consider then with what you would stand in front of Allah and with which tongue you would answer Him, and prepare answer for every question, and make right your answer, and do deeds along the remaining short days of your lifetime for the sake of long days to live after death, in a perishable abode for the sake of a permanent abode, in an abode of grief and trouble for the sake of an abode of bliss and eternity. Work before you would not be able to work.

It should be known to you that religion has no substitute, faith has no replacement, body has no successor; and whoever has his riding mount the day and night, he would be conveyed to the end of his journey. So, get admonished, O self, with that admonition, and accept that advice, for whoever turns away from admonition seems to be pleased with the fire, and I do not think you are pleased with it. If it is harshness of the heart which prevents you from accepting admonition, seek the aid of Tahajjud and standing for prayer and remembrance of Allah by night. If it remains, then, be regular on fasting. If it still remains, abstain from mixing and talking to others. If it still remains, adhere to maintaining kinship ties and kindness to the orphans. If, after all of this, it does not vanish, then, you should know that Allah Almighty has set a seal on your heart which locked it and that the darkness of sins heaped up on its external and internal surface. In this way, habituate yourself to the fire, for Allah Almighty created Paradise and created men for it, and created fire and created men for it.

It is related by Wahb Ibn Munabbih that when Allah Almighty caused Adam "peace be upon him" to descend from the Garden to the earth, he kept shedding tears, and on the seventh day of his descent, Allah Almighty looked at him and he was grieved and sad. He revealed to him: "O Adam! What is that trouble I see in you?" he said: "O Lord! My calamity has got aggravated, and my sin encircled me. I have been driven out of the dominion of my Lord into the abode of humiliation

after dignity, in the abode of wretchedness after happiness, in the abode of suffering after comfort, in the abode of affliction after wellbeing, in the abode of loss after stability, in the abode of death and annihilation after survival and eternity. Then, how should I not weep for my mistake?" On that Allah Almighty revealed to him: "O Adam! Have I not chosen you for Myself, and made you live in My abode, and favored you with My dignity, and warned you of My displeasure? Have I not created you with My Own Hand, breathed in you of My Spirit, and made My angels fall in prostration to you? But you disobeyed My command and forgot My covenant and thus exposed yourself to My displeasure. By My Honor and Glory, were I to fill the earth with men like you all worshipping and exalting Me, and then they disobeyed Me, I would enlist them among the disobedient." On that Adam "peace be upon him" kept weeping ceaselessly for three hundred years.

Ubaidullah Al-Bajli used to weep so much. He used to say in his weeping along the night: "O my God! The more I live long, the more my sins increase. Every time I intend to leave a mistake, another desire appears to me."

According to Mansur Ibn Ammar: I heard one night a worshipper in Kufah talking privately to Allah with the following: "O Lord! By Your Honor, I have not intended by my sin to oppose You, and when I disobeyed You, I was not ignorant of Your position, nor regarding with slightness Your vision of me: But it is my soul which made it alluring to me, and my wretchedness helped me, and Your screening me deceived me. The result is that I disobeyed You with my ignorance, and opposed You with my act. Who is it now to deliver me from Your punishment, and by the rope of whom should I hold fast if You cut off Your rope from me? How sorry I would be when I stand in front of You in the hereafter, when those of light burdens would be permitted to cross the path and those of the heavy burdens would be ordered to place their burdens. In the company of each of both would I be?"

Those are the ways of people in their private talk to their Lord, and blaming and reproaching themselves, and their purpose of their private talk is to please Allah Almighty, and their purpose of blaming themselves is to alert and take care of their own selves. Whoever then neglects private talk to Allah and blaming himself is about not to please Allah, nor to look after his own self.

End of book of Reckoning and Watching, followed, Allah willing, by the Book of Meditation.

All perfect praise be to Allah Alone, and Allah's blessing and peace be upon our master Muhammad, his family and companions.

Book nine: Meditation

It is the nineth book of the quarter of Saviors in the revival of religion's sciences

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All perfect praise be to Allah Who did not make an ending limit to His Power and Honor, nor gave understandings and minds an access to His grandeur and majesty: On the contrary, He left the hearts and minds of the petitioner in the field of His supremacy confused and wandering, and every time they move thinking they would attain what they seek for, they would be repelled by the lights of glory, and every time they intend to turn away in despair, they would be called, from pavilions of beauty, to wait in patience, and asked to go on meditation in the glory of the Lord. But even, if they reflect the glory of the Lord, they would not be able to give it its due estimate; and if they seek further in their attributes, then, they should consider the favors of Allah He bestowed upon them in succession, and give Him thanks for every favor and grace, and reflect how the oceans of fate overflow upon the people in the worlds in good and evil, benefit and harm, ease and difficulty, felicity and loss, amendment and destruction, belief and disbelief, approval and disapproval. But if they go beyond considering the acts to the Divine essence, it would be extremely grievous.

May Allah send blessing and peace upon Muhammad, the chief of mankind, and upon his family and companions, each of whom has become a full moon in the heaven of religion. Coming to the point:

It is related in the Prophetic sunnah that "meditation (in the signs and favors of Allah) for an hour is better (in value) than worship for a year." (Ibn Hibban on the authority of Abu Hurairah; and Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Anas). Allah Almighty urges, more often, the people to meditate, reflect and consider. It is not hidden that thought is the key to lights and the beginning step towards insight, the network of sciences and the grid of knowledge. Although most people know its favor and grace, they, therefore, are ignorant of its real nature, fruit and source.

For this reason, it is important to reveal the reality of that, and this is the topic of this book:

We shall begin, Allah willing, by explication of the virtue of meditation; real nature and fruit of meditation; and then fields and areas of thought.

CHAPTER ONE
EXPLICATION OF VIRTUE OF MEDITATION

Allah Almighty enjoined meditation and consideration in many locations of His Book. He praised those who give thought as shown in His statement: "Men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and meditate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with

the thought): "Our Lord! not for naught have you created (all) this! Glory to You! Give us salvation from the Penalty of the Fire." (Al Imran 191)

﴿ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: A people meditated in (the essence of) Allah Almighty, thereupon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to them: "Meditate about the creatures of Allah and not in (the essence of) Allah, for you would never be able to give Him His due estimate." (Abu Na'im).

It is further narrated that once the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out to a people and they were sitting in meditation. He asked them: "Why are you silent?" They said: "We are silent because we are meditating in the creatures of Allah Almighty." On that he said to them: "As such you should do. Meditate about the creatures of Allah Almighty, and do not meditate about (the essence of) Allah Himself. However, in that West, there is a white land, whose light is its whiteness, and whiteness is its light, and it is as long as is the course of the sun (from East to West) along forty years. There are creatures from among the creatures of Allah Almighty, who have never disobeyed Him in the least." They asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Where is Satan from them?" he said: "They do not know whether or not Satan was created." They further asked: "Do they belong to the offspring of Adam?" he said: "They even do not know whether or not Adam was created." (this is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Salam).

It is narrated on the authority of Ata' that he said: I went in the company of Ubaid Ibn Umair to A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" and she talked to us from behind a partition. She said: "O Ubaid! What prevents you from visiting us?" he said: "I follow the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Postpone your visit, perchance you would become dearer." He further said to her: "Tell us about the most wonderful thing you saw from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"." She wept and said: "All his deeds were wonderful. Once, he came to me when it was my night-and-day turn, and when his skin touched mine he said to me: "Let me worship my Lord Almighty." He stood and went to the water-skin to perform ablution, and then offered prayer in which he wept so much that his tears wetted his beard. Then he fell in prostration so long until his tears wetted the ground. Then, he lay on his side until Bilal came to inform him of the due time of Morning prayer. He asked him: "O Messenger of Allah! What causes you to weep, given that Allah has forgiven for you your previous and later sins?" He said: "May Allah have mercy upon you O Bilal! Why should I not weep and Allah Almighty revealed to me that night: "Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of Night and Day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding." (Al Imran 190)

﴿ إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُوْلِي ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴾

Woe to him who recited it and then did not meditate because of it." (Ibn Hibban). It was said to Al-Awza'i: "How should one meditate about them?" he

said: “To recite and then understand them well.”

It is narrated on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Wasi’ that a man went to Umm Dharr after the death of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him", to ask her about his worship, thereupon she said to him: “He used to spend his day in meditation in one corner of the house.”

It is narrated that Al-Hassan said: “Meditation (in the signs of Allah) for an hour is better than standing for a night (in prayer).”

According to Al-Fudail: “Reflection is a mirror that lets you see your good and bad deeds.”

It was said to Ibrahim: “You always have long reflection.” On that he said: “Reflection is the marrow of mind.”

According to Tawus, the disciples said to Jesus "peace be upon him": “O Spirit of Allah! Is there on the surface of the earth anybody like you?” he said: “Yes, he, whose speech is remembrance (of Allah), whose silence meditation (in the signs of Allah), and whose vision consideration, is like me.”

According to Al-Hassan: “He, whose speech is not wisdom, it is falsehood; and he, whose silence is not meditation (in the signs of Allah), it is forgetfulness; and he, whose vision is not consideration, it is amusement.”

It is said, in comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: “Those who behave arrogantly on the earth in defiance of right, them will I turn away from My Signs: even if they see all the Signs, they will not believe in them” (Al-A’raf 146)

﴿ سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ ءَايَـٰتِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ كُلَّ ءَايَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهَا ﴾

“It means I would prevent their hearts and minds from meditation and contemplation (of My signs).”

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa’id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “Give your eyes their fortune of worship.” They said: “O Messenger of Allah! What is their fortune of worship?” He said: “To look at the Mushaf (the Qur’an), meditate its signs and Verses, and take consideration at its wonders.” (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Ibn Hibban).

It is related from a woman who lived in the desert near Mecca that she said: “Were the hearts of the pious to know, by virtue of meditation and contemplation, what is kept for them in the unseen, of the good of the hereafter, no living would be pleasing to them in this world, nor would they be satisfied with anything they have.”

It is further related that Luqman used to sit in privacy for long times, and whenever his freed slave passed by him, he would say to him: “O Luqman! You sit in seclusion for long times. Would that you sit with the people!” he said: “Indeed, the long privacy is more convenient to stimulate meditation; and the deep meditation is an indication of the way to Paradise.”

According to Wahb Ibn Munabbih: “The long meditation leads to knowledge, and knowledge leads to work.”

According to Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz: “The meditation of the favors of Allah Almighty is among the best acts of worship.”

Abdullah Ibn Al-Mubarak said one day to Sahl Ibn Ali and he was silent, swimming in his meditation: "Where have you reached in your thought?" he said: "The bridge (that is held over Hell)."

According to Bishr: "Were the people to meditate about the grandeur of Allah Almighty, surely, they would never disobey Him."

According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them": "A two-rak'ah prayer to be offered moderately with meditation is better than the standing for a whole night (in prayer) without meditation."

According to Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani: "Habituate your eyes to weep so much, and your minds to meditate (about Allah's signs)." He said once again: "Meditation about this world veils one from the hereafter and leads to his punishment; whereas meditation about the hereafter develops wisdom and brings hearts to life."

According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them": "Meditation about good invites one to act upon it; and regret for evil invites one to leave it."

It is related that Allah Almighty said in one of His Scriptures: "I do not accept the words of every wise man: but rather I consider his concern and inclination. If he is concerned with, and inclined to Me, I make his silence meditation and speech praise even if he speaks not."

According to Al-Junaid: "The noblest and highest assembly is to sit with meditation in the field of monotheism, to breathe from the breezes of wisdom and knowledge, to drink, with the cup of love, from the ocean of affection, and to regard Allah Almighty with good assumption."

According to Ash-Shafi'i: "Seek the aid of silence for talking, and of meditation for understanding." He said once again: "The correct vision of matters is the best salvation from the evil of conceit; and decisiveness in opinion is safety from indulgence; and regret, deliberation and meditation reveal firmness and good sense; and consultation of wise men makes firm the soul and strengthens the insight. So, think before you decide to do anything, be cautious before you take the initiative to do it, and consult (the wise men) before you proceed on." He further said: "Virtues are four: One is wisdom, and its substance is meditation. The second is chastity, and its substance lies in the desire. The third is power and its substance lies in anger. The fourth is justice, and its substance lies in the balance of the forces of the self."

CHAPTER TWO

EXPLICATION OF REAL NATURE AND FRUIT OF MEDITATION

It should be known to you that the meaning of meditation is to bring two items of knowledge into the heart in order to deduce therefrom a third item. A typical example is that if one inclines to the transitory things (of this life), and gives preference to the life of world, and at the same time, wants to know that the hereafter is more fitting to be given preference than the world, he has two ways to know this:

The first is to hear this fact from another one, i.e. that the hereafter is better and more fitting for preference than this world, thereupon he imitates him, and gives trust to his statement without having insight of the reality of the matter. He

then inclines, with his work, to the hereafter, simply depending on the statement of the other one. That is called imitation, and not knowledge.

The other way is to know that the more enduring should be more fitting for preference, and then learn that the hereafter is more enduring, and deduce, from both items of knowledge, a third item, i.e. that the hereafter is more fitting for preference. This third item is indeed based on the previous two, thus, to bring two item of knowledge into the heart in order to deduce therefrom a third item of knowledge is called meditation, consideration, contemplation, remembrance, reflection and deliberation: All are almost synonyms of the same meaning, with slight variation according to which each focuses on a certain point of the meaning. Remembrance, for example, is given to bringing the first two items of knowledge, without going beyond them to the third one. Thus, meditation/contemplation/reflection is more comprehensive than remembrance. The benefit of remembrance is to repeat knowledge in order to confirm them, whereas the benefit of meditation is to increase the different categories of knowledge and bring new kinds into the heart. That is the difference between remembrance and meditation.

If different items of knowledge gather in the hart in pairs according to a particular order, they would produce a further knowledge. Knowledge then is a fruit of knowledge, which turns into a cause of another knowledge to be produced therefrom, and so on. In this way, knowledge, sciences and meditation continue to develop and grow in the mind endlessly. To know the way to utilize and invest knowledge to be productive as such occurs once through a Divine light to be inspired to the heart, as was the state of the Prophets "peace be upon them"; and this is very rare. It once occurs by learning and practice; and this is more often.

On the other hand, the reflector might have those items of knowledge with their fruit, while he does not know the way it occurs, and fails to express it in words. How many a person knows, for certain, that the hereafter is better and more fitting for preference than this world. But were he to be asked about why he knows that, he would not be able to give answer, although his knowledge of that is produced from the two previous items of knowledge, i.e. that the more enduring should be more fitting for preference, and since the hereafter is more enduring, the hereafter then should be more fitting for preference.

That is the real nature of meditation, i.e. to bring two items of knowledge in order to deduce therefrom a result. As for the fruit of meditation, it lies in sciences, states and deeds. But its special fruit here is knowledge. It is true that when knowledge occurs in the heart and mind, their state necessarily changes, and the change of the heart's state leads to the change of the deeds of organs. Meditation, in this sense, is the key and fountainhead of all good things. It is that which reveals to you the excellence of meditation, as being better than remembrance and memorization. Since the meditation of the heart is more than remembrance, and to be sure, the remembrance of the heart is better than the deed of the organs. That is why meditation is more excellent than all deeds.

That is the significance of the statement: "Meditation for an hour is better

than the worship for a whole year." It is said that it refers to the movement from what is disliked to what is liked, and from desire and prudence to asceticism and satisfaction. It is also said, in its interpretation, that refers to that which results in contemplation and piety in the hearts. For this reason, Allah Almighty said: "in order that they may fear Allah, or that it may cause their remembrance (of Him)." (Ta Ha 113)

﴿ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحْدِثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴾

There are then five degrees: First is remembrance, which is to bring two items of knowledge into the heart. The second is meditation, which is to pursue the knowledge that is intended by them, i.e. the result. The third is to obtain the desired knowledge which enlightens the heart. The fourth is to change the heart's state because of getting the new knowledge. The fifth is the organs' service of the heart according to the occurring state. This new knowledge which enlightens the heart enables it to see what it did not see before that, which, in turn, is reflected on changing its state. The result is that the organs do, on the light of the new knowledge, deeds which were not available before because of darkness in the absence of that light.

The fruit of meditation then is sciences and states, and sciences are limitless, and the states in which the heart is imagined to turn to are also beyond calculation. This means, of course, that the fields of meditation are innumerable.

It is true that we do our best to enumerate its fields according to the tasks of religious sciences and stations of the followers of the path (to the hereafter). But this, if done, would be general and not detailed, for the details require to give explanation to all sciences and branches of knowledge, and this is quite impossible. However, all contents of that book with its four volumes give explanation to some of them. But even, it is important to refer, though briefly, to the general fields of meditation; and this will be, Allah willing, the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE
EXPLICATION OF FIELDS OF MEDITATION

It should be known to you that the fields of meditation might be religious or worldly. Our topic here is limited to the religious fields. By religion we mean the relation that is between the servant and his Lord. All thoughts of anyone are related either with the servant, his attributes and states, or with the worshipped Lord, His attributes and acts. What is related with the servant includes meditation in what is liked or what is disliked by Allah Almighty. What is related with the Lord Almighty includes meditation in His essence, attributes, most beautiful names, or in His acts, dominion and kingdom, i.e. all that is in the heavens and earth and what is in between them.

The fields of meditation are limited to those four things. The lover of Allah Almighty should not go, with his meditation, beyond his beloved. Since his meditation is limited to those four divisions, he then does not deviate from love in principle.

Let's begin with the first division, i.e. to meditate in one's attributes and acts,

in order to distinguish what is liked thereof from what is disliked. That division of meditation addresses the science of practical religion (Mu'amalah), which is intended from that book, whereas the other division addresses the science of revelation (Mukashafah). Therefore, what is liked and disliked, in the sight of Allah Almighty, is divided into the apparent, like the acts of worship and sins, and the hidden like the saving and destructive attributes, which lie in the heart; and we have mentioned them in detail in the quarter of Destructives and the quarter of Saviors.

Sins are divided into what is related only with the seven organs, and what is related with the whole parts of the body, like the flight from the battlefield, undutifulness to parents and living in an unlawful residence, etc. as far as what is disliked is concerned, meditation should include three things: first: to meditate whether or not it is disliked in the Sight of Allah Almighty. Second: To meditate that in case it is really disliked, then, what is the way to avoid it? Third: To consider: Does he have this disliked thing presently, which means that he should leave it immediately, or would he be exposed to it in the future, which means that he should do his best to avoid it, or did he commit it in the past, which means that he should make amend for it? The same also applies to what is liked.

If those divisions gather together, the fields of meditation then would be over one hundred. The servant is forced to meditate in some or most of them. It would be too lengthy to explain each one of those in detail. But anyway, all are included in four general divisions: acts of worship, sins, saviors and destructives. Let us refer to each briefly.

First, sins: In the morning of everyday, one should inspect his seven organs and then all parts of his body in general about a present sin which he is committing to avoid, a past sin which he did to make amend for, or a probable sin to which he might possibly be exposed in the future to keep himself far from. Let him first inspect his tongue which is apt to backbiting, talebearing, telling lies, insulting and abusing others, etc. he should state first, within himself, that those are disliked in the Sight of Allah, and then consider the evidences from the Qur'an and sunnah for the severe punishment resulting from them. Then, let him meditate in his state, and how he is exposed to any of those while he feels not, and how he should avoid them, putting in mind that he could not do so except by being in seclusion, or sitting only with the righteous among men, to disapprove of him whenever he speaks with what is disliked by Allah. As such he should meditate concerning all his organs and parts of body. Once he knows, by virtue of that meditation, the reality of his states, he would then engage in watching over himself along the day, in order to safeguard the organs from committing any such sins.

Second, the acts of worship: He should first consider the obligatory duties binding on him, how he should perform them, and guard them from any deficiency or indulgence, or amend the shortage therein by supererogatory deeds. Then, let him inspect organs one by one, and meditate in the acts unique to each, of what is liked by Allah Almighty. Let him say, for instance,

that “the eye has been created to look at the dominion of the heavens and the earth, by way of consideration, to be used in obedience of Allah Almighty, and look at the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Prophet "peace be upon him": Then, since I am able to do so, why should I not do it?" The same is true of his remaining organs.

Third, the destructive attributes which lie in the heart. They include such evil attributes as desire, anger, niggardliness, envy, bad assumption, arrogance, haughtiness, showing off, heedlessness, etc. let him consider those attributes and whether or not his heart is free from them. If he thinks that his heart is free from them, let him think how to test it, by way of confirmation. Man always considers himself good although when putting himself to trial, he might not prove so. Each of those has a distinctive sign by which it might be recognized as we have mentioned in the quarter of Destructives. If the sign indicates that he has one of such attributes, he should then think how to deface it in his sight, in order to be able to avoid it. Once he knows the evil of each attribute, he should think about the way of remedy to remove that attribute from his heart. We have mentioned that one of the ways of remedy is to do the opposite of the evil attribute until it is removed from himself.

Fourth, the saving characteristics: It is to repent from sins, show regrets for disobedience, give thanks for favors and persevere with patience on the trials and ordeals, fear (from punishment), have hope (in the Garden), abstain in this world, be sincere and true in the acts of worship, love and honor Allah Almighty, be contented with His acts and decrees, be attached in love to meeting Him, be submissive and humble to Him, and so on. We have already mentioned all of this, along with the causes and signs, in this quarter of Saviors. So, let the servant meditate, everyday, about what he lacks of those characteristics which bring him close to Allah Almighty. If he detects that he lacks some of them, he should know that those are states which in themselves are fruits of sciences, and sciences are fruits of thoughts and reflections.

If he, for instance, likes to motivate within himself the state of repentance and regret, let him first inspect his sins and bring them to his mind, and regard them with seriousness in his heart and then consider the severe threat and promised punishment for them as mentioned in the Book of Allah and the sunnah of the Prophet "peace be upon him", putting in mind that by committing them, he exposes himself to the displeasure and wrath of Allah Almighty, which stimulates within himself the state of regret.

On the other hand, if he likes to motivate within himself the state of gratitude, let him first inspect the favors and grace of Allah He bestowed upon him. If he likes the state of love and attachment, let him reflect the glory, majesty, beauty and grandeur of Allah Almighty, by looking at the wonders of his wisdom and making as we shall show later in the second division of meditation. The same applies then to all the other states he likes to obtain.

That is the way of meditation to obtain sciences which produce the inclination to liked states and disinclination from disliked states. We have assigned to each one of those state a particular section in this book. Nothing

combines them more beneficial than recitation of the Holy Qur'an with meditation, for it contains all stations and states, and healing for the worlds from all heart diseases, develops in the soul both fear and hope, patience and gratitude, love and attachment, etc, and averts from all blameworthy attributes. So, the servant should recite it with reflection, and repeat each Verse he needs to meditate in again and again even if he is to recite it over one hundred times. Indeed, to recite a single Qur'anic Verse with meditation is better than to recite the entire Qur'an from the beginning to the end on one night without deliberation. Let him pause at each Holy Verse for reflection as long as it needs, for underneath every word lie countless mysteries, which could be understood only with deep reflection and pure heart and mind.

The same also is true of learning the news of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" for he was given the faculty of expression with the shortest words that bear the widest and most comprehensive meanings. Each word of his is an ocean of wisdom. Consider, for instance, his statement: "The Holy Spirit (Gabriel) inspired to me that 'it is the same to you to love whomever you love, since you would inevitably leave him (by death), to live as long as it might seem to you, since you would necessarily die, and to do deeds as you like since you would be rewarded for them." This statement comprehends the wisdom of all the foremost and last generations, and is sufficient for those who reflect on it along their lifetime. Were to know its meaning, and have certain faith in it, surely, it would overtake them entirely so much that they would no longer turn to that world with all its pleasures and delights.

That is the way of meditation in the sciences of practical religion, and the attributes of the servant, and whether they are liked or disliked in the Sight of Allah Almighty. The beginner should spend his time in those thoughts in order to fill his heart with the praiseworthy manners and noble stations, and keep his inward and outward away from what is disliked. But even, one should put in mind that this, though being superior to the other acts of worship, is not the ultimate finale in itself: Indeed, whoever is engaged in it is veiled from the ultimate finale of the sincere lovers and affirmers of truth, i.e. to be blessed in meditation in the majesty and beauty of Allah Almighty, which involves the heart so much that it is consumed from itself, or in other words, is diverted from itself and its states, stations and attributes. That is because his concern is wholeheartedly devoted to his beloved. It is the utmost pleasure of lovers.

But what we have mentioned is to meditate in the way to fill the inward, to be fitting for closeness and connection. If one spends his entire lifetime in mending himself, then, when would he be blessed in the closeness to Allah? The self-consumption in the One and Real is the purpose of the petitioners, and the utmost bliss of the sincere affirmers and lovers of truth.

As such you should understand the way of religion if you are among the men of closeness. But if you are like an evil slave who never moves but for fear of punishment and in the hope of reward, then, sufficient for you are the physical movements with the apparent deeds, for in this case, there would be a very thick

veil between you and the heart. If you do the deeds to the best, it is true that you would be from among the inhabitants of Paradise, but still not one of these of closeness (to Allah).

If you know the fields of meditation in the sciences of practical religion between the servant and his Lord, you should take heed of them every morning and evening. Do not neglect yourself: neither your attributes that keep you away from Allah Almighty, nor your states that bring you close to Him. Every novice (on the path) should have a notepad to record in it both the destructive and saving attributes, both sins and acts of worship, and measure himself on it everyday. Ten suffice him for the destructives; and if he is saved from them, he would be safe from the others: niggardliness, arrogance, haughtiness, showing off, envy, extreme anger, greed for food, greed for sex, love for property, and love for majesty. For the saviors, ten also suffice him: Regret for sins, patience on trials and ordeals, contentment with the fate, gratitude for favors, moderate fear (from punishment) and hope (in the reward), abstinence from this world, sincerity in deeds, good manners and love for and submission to Allah Almighty. The total is twenty.

Let him first turn to the destructive ones and strive his utmost to remove them from himself one by one, and every time he purifies himself from one of them, let him tag it and move to the next one, and give thanks to Allah for helping him do so, putting in mind that if he succeeds to remove any of them, it goes back to the power and will of Allah Almighty; and were it to be entrusted to himself, he would not be able to remove even the least vice. On the other hand, let him turn to the saving attributes, one by one and do his best to acquire them and make them a part of his character, following the same method adopted in removing the destructive ones. That is the way to be followed by the serious novice.

As for the righteous, they should record in their notepads all apparent sins and crimes, for whatever righteous one might seem, he could hardly be free from some of those sins in his organs. Unless one engages in purifying his organs, by no means would he be able to engage in purifying his heart. Everyone should be concerned with the sins which he himself does more than in the sins committed by others. To be sure, religion is not in need of anyone, but none could dispense with religion. Among the most destructive attributes to be avoided particularly by scholars is showing off, according to which one seeks majesty and celebrity, thinking he serves the religion. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Love for majesty and property causes showing off to grow in the heart in the same way as water causes seeds to grow in the earth." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "No rabid wolves have been sent to a fold of sheep, more destructive than those two of love for property, honour and majesty in the religion of a Muslim person." (At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Ka'b Ibn Malik).

If one detects in himself that characteristic, he should remove it, and it could not be removed unless one lives in seclusion and privacy from the people, and abstains from mixing with them. That is indeed the duty of the pious scholars. As

for the like of us, we should meditate in what strengthens our faith in the Day of Reckoning. Our deeds are not the deeds of such as has faith in Paradise and Hell. Whoever fears a thing should inevitably flee from it, and whoever has hope in a thing should necessarily pursue it. In order to flee from the fire, we should leave sins and crimes and keep away from what is suspicious. But we do not do so. In order to pursue Paradise, we should increase our supererogatory deeds, after fulfilling the obligatory duties. But even, we fall short of doing our obligatory duties, let alone the supererogatory deeds. Thus, we have obtained from the fruit of knowledge nothing other than our being imitated by the laymen in the greediness for the world, under pretext that had this been blameworthy, surely, the scholars would have been more entitled to leave it. Would that we were among the laymen and not scholars, and when we die, our sins die with us.

That is the field of meditation available to the scholars and righteous in the science of practical religion. Once they finish from that, let them promote therefrom to the meditation in the glory and beauty of Allah Almighty, and bless themselves with contemplating Him with the eye of the heart. But this could be achieved only after getting rid of all destructive attributes, and acquiring all saving characteristics. If something of that contemplation emerges to anyone before finishing from both tasks entirely, it would soon disappear like the flash of lightning.

The second division is the meditation in the glory, majesty and grandeur of Allah Almighty. It has two stations: the supreme station, which is to meditate in His essence, attributes, and the meanings of His names. But it is that from which we have been prevented. It is said: "Meditate in the creation of Allah Almighty, and not in the essence of Allah." That is because the minds are too limited to endure to comprehend Him Almighty in perception. The example of all the creatures, in their sights to Allah Almighty is like bats in their sights to the light of the sun: they never endure looking at it. The example of the sincere affirmers and lovers of truth, from among all the creatures, is like mankind in their sights to the sun: Although they could look at it, they could not persist in looking at it more than a few moments, after which the sight would be damaged and lost. The right then is not to expose oneself to meditation in the essence and attributes of Allah, for most minds could hardly endure that.

For this reason, Allah Almighty revealed to one of His Prophets: "Tell not My servant about My attributes lest they would deny Me, but rather tell them about Me with what they could understand of Me." Since the meditation in the essence and attributes of Allah Almighty leads to a great risk from that perspective, the discipline of Sharia and rectitude of the creatures require not to expose ourselves to meditation in that field.

Let's us then move to the second station, which is to meditate in His acts, areas of His power, and wonders of His making: This indicates to His glory and majesty, holiness and exaltation, perfect knowledge and wisdom, comprehensive overall power and will. In this way, we look at His attributes from the traces of His attributes, for we could not endure looking at His attributes in the same way as we could not endure looking at the light of the sun, but rather look at the

ground while illuminated with the light of the sun. we indeed attest how great the light of the sun is from the light of the moon and the other planets, for those are but traces of the light of the sun. All things in existence are among the traces of the power and will of Allah Almighty. We then see the attributes of the Maker from meditation in His making, which stands for intermediary between us and His acts and attributes. That is the significance of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Meditate in the creation of Allah, and not in the essence of Allah."

CHAPTER FOUR
EXPLICATION OF THE WAY OF MEDITATION IN THE CREATION OF ALLAH ALMIGHTY

It should be known to you that all things in existence, other than Allah Almighty, are the creation and making of Him Almighty, and in each atom and molecule lie wonders and marvels indicative of His power, will, wisdom and glory. It is impossible to calculate all of this for "If the ocean were ink (wherewith to write out) the words of my Lord. Sooner would the ocean be exhausted than would the words of my Lord, even if we added another ocean like it, for its aid." (Al-Kahf 109)

﴿ قُل لَّوْ كَانَ ٱلْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِّكَلِمَٰتِ رَبِّى لَنَفِدَ ٱلْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَن تَنفَدَ كَلِمَٰتُ رَبِّى وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِۦ مَدَدًا ﴿١٠٩﴾ ﴾

However, let's refer to an example as representative of all.

We say that the created existents are divided into what is unknown to us, and thus it is impossible for us to meditate in them. How many existents which we do not know as confirmed by Allah Almighty: "and He has created (other) things of which you have no knowledge." (An-Nahl 8)

﴿ وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

And: "Glory to Allah, Who created in pairs all things that the earth produces, as well as their own (human) kind and (other) things of which they have no knowledge." (Ya Sin 36)

﴿ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلْأَزْوَٰجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنۢبِتُ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

And: "From changing your Forms and creating you (again) in (Forms) that you know not." (Al-Waqi'ah 61)

﴿ عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّبَدِّلَ أَمْثَٰلَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ فِى مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ﴾

The second division of the existents are things which are known to us in general, but not in their details. It is those details then in which we could meditate. Those are divided into what we have perceived by the sense of sight, and what we have perceived but not with the sense of sight, like angels, jinn, devils, Throne (of Majesty), Kursi, etc. the area of meditation in those things is narrow and even abstruse. So, let us leave them for the visibles that are under the reach of understanding, like the seven heavens, the earth and what is between them. The heavens are visible with their planets, stars, orbs and their movements. The earth also is visible with its mountains, minerals, rivers, oceans, trees, plants, animals, etc. what is between the heavens and the earth,

i.e. the atmosphere, is also visible with its clouds, rains, snow, tempests, winds, thunders, lightning, etc.

Those are the visible things in the heavens, the earth and what is between them. Each of those things is divided into different kinds, and each into a variety of branches, diverse in character, form and external and internal attributes, and so on in an endless series. All of this represents the area and field of meditation. No atom, nor a mountain, nor a tree, nor a star, nor a planet, nor anything in the heavens, the earth and what is between them, moves but that it is Allah Almighty Who moves it for one, ten or even countless wisdoms lying underneath it. All of these are witnesses to the oneness, grandeur, supremacy and majesty of Allah Almighty. They are the signs that indicate to Him Almighty.

The Holy Qur'an invites us again and again to reflect those signs, saying: "Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of Night and Day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding." (Al Imran 190)

﴿ إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴾

Do you not see that Allah Almighty says, from the beginning to the end of the Qur'an: "And among His signs" is such and such? Let's mention here the way of meditation in those signs.

Among His signs is the man himself, who is created from a sperm-drop and ahs of and wonders marvels which one could spend his lifetime without being able to comprehend and encompass all of them. O heedless of his own self: how could you be ignorant of yourself and at the same time covetous of knowing others than you? Allah Almighty commanded you in His Holy Book to deliberate yourself saying: "As also in your own selves: Will you not then see?" (Adh-Dhariyat 21)

﴿ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴾

He Almighty reminded you that He created you from a despicable sperm-drop saying: " Woe to man! What has made him reject Allah? From what stuff has He created him? From a sperm-drop: He has created him, and then moulds him in due proportions; Then does He make his path smooth for him; Then He causes him to die, and putts him in his Grave; Then, when it is His Will, He will raise him up (again)." (Abasa 17-22)

﴿ قُتِلَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مَآ أَكْفَرَهُۥ ۞ مِنْ أَىِّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقَهُۥ ۞ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُۥ فَقَدَّرَهُۥ ۞ ثُمَّ ٱلسَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُۥ ۞ ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُۥ فَأَقْبَرَهُۥ ۞ ثُمَّ إِذَا شَآءَ أَنشَرَهُۥ ﴾

In confirmation of that, He Almighty said too: "Among His Signs is this, that He created you from dust; and then, behold, you are men scattered (far and wide)!" (Ar-Rum 20)

﴿ وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ تَنتَشِرُونَ ﴾

And: "Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (in lowly form)? Then did he become a clinging clot; then did (Allah) make and fashion (him) in due proportion." (Al-Qiyamah 37-38)

﴿ أَلَمْ يَكُ نُطْفَةً مِّن مَّنِيٍّ يُمْنَىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾ ﴾

And: "Have We not created you from a fluid (held) despicable? The which We placed in a place of rest, firmly fixed, For a period (of gestation), determined (according to need)?" (Al-Mursalat 20-22)

﴿ أَلَمْ نَخْلُقكُّم مِّن مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾ إِلَىٰ قَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ ﴾

And: "Does not man see that it is We Who created him from sperm? Yet behold! he (stands forth) as an open adversary!" (Ya Sin 77)

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧٧﴾ ﴾

And: "Verily We created Man from a drop of mingled sperm, in order to try him: so We gave him (the gifts), of Hearing and Sight." (Al-Insan 2)

﴿ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

Then, He Almighty clarified how He turned the sperm-drop into a clinging like-leech clot of congealed blood, then into a morsel of flesh, and the morsel of flesh into bones covering it in His saying: "Man We did create from a quintessence (of clay); Then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed; Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (fetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be Allah, the Best to create!" (Al-Mu'minun 12-14)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

The repetition of the word sperm-drop across the Holy Book is not intended to be heard without reflection. Consider the sperm which is no more than a despicable drop, and were it to be left in the air for an hour, it would putrefy. Consider then how Allah Almighty brings it out from between backbone and ribs; and how He gathers between the male and the female, and draws affection and love in their hearts; and how He leads them, by virtue of love and desire, to have sexual intercourse; and how He brings the sperm-drop from the male as a result of ejaculation of semen into the female's womb; and how He causes it to penetrate the ovum and fertilizes it to produce the first cell of the fetus; and how He develops the sperm-drop in the womb to turn into a clinging leech-like clot of congealed blood; and how He turns this clot of blood into a morsel of flesh; and how He extracts therefrom bones, nerves, strings, and veins; and how He forms from that the different organs and parts of body, beginning from the head, the eye, the ear, the nose, the mouth, and all the other outlets, and then creates hands and feet, ending with fingers which He divides by joints; and how He forms the internal organs like the heart, the stomach, the liver, the kidney, both lungs, the intestines, the uterus in the woman, the bladder, and so on, each having a particular form, to do a specific duty; and how He composes each of those

organs from different parts, each in proportion to its place and function; and so on. Were one to consider the wonders that lie in only one of those, surely, he would spend his entire lifetime even without being able to fathom it as it should be.

The point here is not to know the detailed anatomy of the body for this science is unique to the physicians which are more acquainted with it. But the purpose is to meditate, therefrom, in their Creator and Manipulator: how He creates them and gives them their due proportions, in the most fitting way that were they to change in form, increase or decrease even by one, they would cease to function. The purpose of the physician from regarding them is to know the way to remedy them, whereas the purpose of those endued with insight is to attest the glory of their Creator Who gives them form. How different those views are from each other!

The field of meditation is to consider those parts of body one by one, and then as a whole. Each has countless wonders and marvels, given that the wonders of the attributes and characteristics which are not perceived by senses, are greater. If all of this is the making of Allah which He produces from a drop of despicable semen, then, what do you think about the wonders of His making in the dominion of the heavens and the earth and what is between them? Think not that even a single atom in the dominion of the heavens and the earth is free form one or more wisdoms. They are more perfect and more elaborate than the human body. Moreover, all wonders on earth are insignificant in comparison with the wonders of the heavens. That is the meaning of His statement: "What! Are you the more difficult to create or the heaven (above)? (Allah) has constructed it: On high has He raised its canopy, and He has given it order and perfection. Its night does He endow with darkness, and its splendour does He bring out (with light)." (An-Nazi'at 27-29)

﴿ ءَأَنتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمِ ٱلسَّمَآءُ ۚ بَنَىٰهَا ﴿٢٧﴾ رَفَعَ سَمْكَهَا فَسَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾

Consider then the original state of the sperm-drop and the new state to which it turns to be, and think if both men and jinn gather together to create in it any of the five senses or any part of the body, or to breathe spirit into it, could they be able to do? Wonder at you when you look at a well-drawn picture on a wall and appreciate its making, given that the maker does not create it in so much as gathers together the different constituents which are originally created by another, i.e. the Real Creator, and composes it therefrom. Is there any comparison between that and the creation of man from a despicable sperm-drop? Were the cover to be removed from the womb, surely, one might be able to see how it acquires the form and shape step by step, without seeing the maker and giver of form himself: have you ever seen a thing being made with no direct relation or contact between it and its maker? Moreover, were the foremost and the last, from among jinn and men, to gather together in attempt to modify the figure of a man from the very form and shape in which it is created by Allah Almighty, of a surety, they would fail to find a form better than that in which it is created. Exalted be Allah: How excellent is He, and how evident is His proof!

Consider also how the womb of the mother is expanded in proportion to the growth of the fetus inside it, and how the fetus itself moves and bends within it in order to befit the size of the womb surrounding it; and when it is delivered as a babe, how he is guided to pick up the breast of his mother for milk; and how that milk is produced from between blood and excretion as nourishment palatable and suitable to the babe; and how this milk comes out from small holes made on the surface of the teat, and how they are narrow so much in order for milk not to come out without being sucked by the child; and how the child is guided to the process of sucking; and how, when he grows and milk becomes not suitable to his body, teeth are created for him gradually, in order to move from nourishment of milk to the nourishment of food. Consider also how his parents are guided to have affection and love for him which enables them to be in his service when he was powerless and helpless during his early childhood, until he becomes an adult, then a man, then old-aged, whether an obedient believer or a disobedient disbeliever, as confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: "Has there not been over Man a long period of time, when he was nothing, (not even) mentioned? Verily We created Man from a drop of mingled sperm, in order to try him: so We gave him (the gifts), of Hearing and Sight. We showed him the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will)." (Al-Insan 1-3)

﴿ هَلْ أَتَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ حِينٌ مِّنَ ٱلدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْـًٔا مَّذْكُورًا ۝١ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَٰهُ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا ۝٢ إِنَّا هَدَيْنَٰهُ ٱلسَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ۝٣ ﴾

That is a synopsis of the wonders of the making of your body which could not be surveyed at all. But anyway, your body is the nearest field to your meditation, and the clearest evidence indicative of the greatness and grandeur of your Creator. Therefore, you are heedless of that, for you are engaged in fulfilling the appetites of your abdomen and the sexual desires of your genitals. You know nothing about yourself except that whenever you become hungry, you eat, whenever you get tired, you sleep, whenever you grow angry, you fight, and whenever your sexual desire is provoked, you have sexual relation, and so on. Animals share you in all of this.

But the characteristic that is unique to human beings, from which the animals are veiled, is your gnosis of Allah Almighty through reflecting the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and the wonders in the horizons and within selves. It is with that reflection that a servant becomes a member in the company of the angels made near to Allah, and would be mustered in the company of the Prophets and sincere affirmers and lovers of truth made close to the presence of the Lord of the worlds. Of course, this rank is not fitting for animals, nor for a man who is contented from this world only with the same desires of animals. That man is worse than the animal, for the animal, in the end, has no power to do more than that, unlike him, for whom Allah Almighty created the power, but he himself makes it idle, and stops it from function. In this way, he is ungrateful to the favor of Allah in it: Such are like animals, and even more straying from the path.

If you then know the field of meditation in your body, move therefrom to

meditation in the earth on which you live, with its mountains, rivers, oceans, plants, animals and minerals, and then up to the dominion of the heavens. Reflect His statement: "With power and skill did We construct the Firmament: for it is We Who create the vastness of Space. And We have spread out the (spacious) earth: how excellently We do spread out!" (Adh-Dhariyat 47-48)

﴿ وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بَنَيۡنَٰهَا بِأَيۡيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ۝ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ فَرَشۡنَٰهَا فَنِعۡمَ ٱلۡمَٰهِدُونَ ۝ ﴾

And: "It is He Who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse you through its tracts and enjoy of the Sustenance which He furnishes: but unto Him is the Resurrection." (Al-Mulk 15)

﴿ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ ذَلُولًا فَٱمۡشُواْ فِى مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُواْ مِن رِّزۡقِهِۦ وَإِلَيۡهِ ٱلنُّشُورُ ۝ ﴾

And: "Who has made the earth your couch, and the heavens your canopy." (Al-Baqarah 22)

﴿ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ فِرَٰشًا وَٱلسَّمَآءَ ۝ ﴾

Allah Almighty, more often, remembers the earth in the Qur'an, due to its numerous wonders: Its surface is made a residence for the living, and its inside as a grave for the dead, as confirmed by His statement: "Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together The living and the dead, And made therein mountains standing firm, lofty (in stature); and provided for you water sweet (and wholesome)?" (Al-Mursalat 25-27)

﴿ أَلَمۡ نَجۡعَلِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ كِفَاتًا ۝ أَحۡيَآءً وَأَمۡوَٰتًا ۝ وَجَعَلۡنَا فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ شَٰمِخَٰتٍ وَأَسۡقَيۡنَٰكُم مَّآءً فُرَاتًا ۝ ﴾

He further said, confirming the wonders of the earth and the heavens, and that He did not create them in vain: "We created not the heavens, the earth, and all between them, merely in (idle) sport; We created them not except for just ends: but most of them do not understand." (Ad-Dukhan 38-39)

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقۡنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا لَٰعِبِينَ ۝ مَا خَلَقۡنَٰهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَهُمۡ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ۝ ﴾

In short, the wonders of the earth are countless, and everything on the earth, be it mountains, air, trees and plants, minerals, oceans, seas, rivers, birds, animals, etc, deserves to be an object of meditation and reflection. Were one to spend his entire lifetime in an attempt to extract the numerous pieces of wisdom lying behind a single one of those things, surely, his lifetime would be consumed without being able even to perceive a few number of them. Of course, all of those wonders we see indicate to the grandeur and majesty of the Creator Almighty.

Among His signs also is the dominion of the heavens and the earth and what is in between them of celestial bodies. Whoever perceives all things and fails to perceive the wonders of the dominion of the heavens has, indeed, perceived nothing at all. The earth, all with its oceans, mountains, rivers, plants and animals, in comparison with the heavens, are like but a single drop in a great ocean. Consider how Allah Almighty honored the heavens in His Book. There is almost no Surah but that the heavens are mentioned in it. Moreover, Allah Almighty

often swears by them in more than one Surah.

Allah Almighty did not swear by the sperm-drop which all the foremost and the last generations failed to perceive the mysteries lying behind it. Then, what do you think about that by which He Almighty swore, and made a place of sustenance saying: "And in heaven is your Sustenance, as (also) that which you are promised." (Adh-Dhariyat 22)

﴿ وَفِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزۡقُكُمۡ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴾

He also praised those of men who reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, saying: "and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought): "Our Lord! not for naught have you created (all) this! Glory to You!" (Al Imran 191)

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يَذۡكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمٗا وَقُعُودٗا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمۡ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلۡقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقۡتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلٗا سُبۡحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴾

On the other hand, He criticized those who are heedless of that, saying: "And We have made the heavens as a canopy well guarded: yet do they turn away from the Signs which these things (point to)!" (Al-Anbiya' 32)

﴿ وَجَعَلۡنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ سَقۡفٗا مَّحۡفُوظٗاۖ وَهُمۡ عَنۡ ءَايَٰتِهَا مُعۡرِضُونَ ﴾

He further said: "And (have We not) built over you the seven Firmaments, And placed (therein) a Light of Splendour?" (An-Naba' 12-13)

﴿ وَبَنَيۡنَا فَوۡقَكُمۡ سَبۡعٗا شِدَادٗا ۝ وَجَعَلۡنَا سِرَاجٗا وَهَّاجٗا ﴾

And: "What! Are you the more difficult to create or the heaven (above)? (Allah) has constructed it: On high has He raised its canopy, and He has given it order and perfection." (An-Nazi'at 27-28)

﴿ ءَأَنتُمۡ أَشَدُّ خَلۡقًا أَمِ ٱلسَّمَآءُۚ بَنَىٰهَا ۝ رَفَعَ سَمۡكَهَا فَسَوَّىٰهَا ﴾

Think not that to be invited to see the dominion of the heavens means to stretch up your sight and look at the blueness of the sky and the light of the stars! Indeed, all animals share you in that vision. If that is what is intended, then, why did Allah Almighty praise Abraham "peace be upon him" saying: "So also did We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude." (Al-An'am 75)

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِيٓ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُوقِنِينَ ﴾

In general, all that is perceived by the sense of sight is referred to in the Qur'an as kingdom of visibles, and all that is beyond the perception of sight is referred to as the dominion of the invisibles and unseen. Allah Almighty is the knower of the kingdom of the visibles, and the subduer of the dominion of the invisibles; and none encompasses anything of His knowledge except for what He wills, and He also never discloses His unseen to anyone except such of Messengers as He likes.

So, O rational man, hasten to contemplate the dominion of the invisibles, perchance the gates of the heavens might be opened to you and you tour with

your heart in their different sides until your heart becomes in front of the Throne (of Majesty) of Allah, Most Gracious. At that point, it may be that you are expected to attain the rank of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" who said: "My heart has seen my Lord." That is because to attain the farthest, you should first exceed the nearest; and the nearest thing to yourself is your own self, then the earth which is your residence, then the atmosphere surrounding you, then the animals and plants and all that is on the surface of the earth, then the wonders of the area that is in between the heavens and the earth, then the seven firmaments of the heaven with their stars and celestial bodies, then the Kursi, then the Throne (of Majesty), then the angels, who are the carriers of the Throne (of Majesty) and the keepers of the heavens, and therefrom you raise up to contemplation of the Lord of the worlds: that is a rank between you and which there are long distances and great obstacles, given that you still has not finished from the nearest obstacle to you, i.e. the knowledge of your own self at least outwardly.

But instead of that, you give the free rein to your tongue to claim rudely that you know your Lord, and the creation of your Lord, then, in which thing further do you need to reflect? Nay! Raise your vision towards the sky and look at their perfect constitution and complete system in which there is no flaw. Among its great wonders is that there is nothing on earth but that it has a picture of its like in the heavens. Reflect also the course of the sun in its orb for a year round the galaxy, and how it rises and sets everyday, and how it is subjugated by its Creator to man, and but for its rising and setting, there would be no difference between both day and night, and it would rather be either perpetual night or perpetual day. The change of the position of the sun concerning the sky produces different seasons along the year, ranging from summer whose heat is scorching, autumn and spring, whose temperature is moderate, and winter, whose cold is severe.

Overall, there is no covet of calculating all wonders of the dominion of the heavens. That is only a guide to the way of meditation in it. There is nothing created by Allah Almighty in the heavens, on earth and in between them but that Allah has, in creating it, countless pieces of wisdom lying behind it. Measure on that the parts of your body, the wisdom of creating each of which is infinite. But even, there is no comparison between the wonders of the world of the earth and the wonders of the dominion of the heavens. Sufficient for example is to know that the men of knowledge have agreed that the sun is one hundred and sixty two times the earth. The same is true of the other stars. According to a certain narration, the distance between each two firmaments of the heaven is as long as a five hundred-year journey. (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Consider also that the stars which are bigger than the earth are thousands of thousands. Consider also their movement so rapidly that you take no heed of it. Consider how Gabriel "peace be upon him" expressed that speed of movement in the narration in which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" asked him: "Has the sun declined?" he said: "No, yes." He asked him: "How do you say no, yes?" he said: "From the moment I said no until I said yes,

the sun has moved as long as a five hundred-year journey." Consider also the power of Allah, Exalted in wise, how He fixed its image, given its great immensity and remoteness of its ends from each other, in the eyeball, given its very smallness.

But at the same time, you should not look at the sky with its hugeness and great stars and celestial bodies in so much as you should look at its Creator: how He created it and raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, so that all the world seems to be like a single house, and the sky its ceiling. Wonder at you that you enter the house of a rich man and admire its good building, wonderful colouring, beautiful engravings, and the like of that, and, meanwhile, live in and see that big house with its earth, wonderful plants, animals, mountains, rivers, oceans, atmosphere and ceiling, and do not talk about it even with a single word of appreciation, given that the latter is incomparable to the former. There is no reason for this except that the latter is the creation of your Lord Almighty, and you have indeed forgotten yourself, your Lord and the house of your Lord Almighty, and rather engaged in the desires of your belly and genitals. You have no concern but to fill your stomach with food, although whatever you eat, you would not be able to eat one-tenth a lot of animals eat. In this way, they excel you in that appetence. The same is true of your sexual desire. You also have no concern but to gather wealth to be as rich as you could, and collect acquaintances to obtain majesty over others, although there might be in your city of Jews and Christians some who are richer and wealthier than you, and have of majesty and authority what is greater than you have. But you are deceived by that and heedless of reflection on the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and of the bliss of looking at the beauty and glory of the Lord of the dominion.

Your example is like an ant which made a hole for itself in the palace of a very rich king and when it comes out of that hole, it has been concerned only with its hole, which diverts it from having any care for the palace with its wonders and inhabitants. As well as the ant is heedless of the palace with its wonders and inhabitants, you are heedless of the house of Allah with its marvels and angels who form its inhabitants. You do not know from the sky no more than the ant knows from the ceiling of your palace, nor do you know from the angels of the heavens who are the inhabitants of the house of Allah no more than the ant knows about you and the inhabitants of your house. But there is a great difference between you and the ant: although the ant has no way to know more about you, the wonders and marvels of your palace and its inhabitants, you have the power to tour in the dominion and know of wonders what a lot of people are heedless of.

Now, let's withdraw the rein of talk in that matter, for it is a field which has no end. Were we to spend long lifetimes, by no means would we be able to explain what Allah Almighty conferred upon us of knowledge. All what we know is but a despicable little amount in comparison with what is known by the learned scholars; and all that is known by the learned scholars is but a despicable little amount in comparison with what was known by the Prophets "peace be upon them"; and all what was known by the Prophets is but a very little amount in

comparison with what was known by our Prophet Muhammad "peace be upon him"; and all what was known by all the Prophets is but a very little amount in comparison with what is known by the angels who are near to Allah Almighty, like Gabriel, Israfil, and others, "peace be upon them"; and all the knowledge given to all the creatures, including angels, jinn, men, is, in comparison with the knowledge of Allah Almighty, not worthy of the term of knowledge. It is more apt to be called confusion, bewilderment, amazement, shortage and failure than to be called knowledge. Exalted be He Who made His servants know what they are doomed to know, and then addressed all of them saying: "of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)" (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

That is an explication of the general fields and areas in which the thought of those who give thought tours in the creation of Allah Almighty. It has no thought in the essence of Allah Almighty. But meditation in the creation inevitably leads to the gnosis of the Creator Almighty: His greatness, majesty, grandeur, glory and power. The more you know about the wonders of His creation, the more your gnosis of His glory and majesty is perfect.

The reflection on the wonders and splendor of the creation of Allah Almighty with the intention to know Him is limitless. But each servant gets from it only as much as is equal to what is doomed to him. Any normal person reflects that is inevitably led to his error and wretchedness, whereas only the one helped by Allah, who reflects on that, is led to his happiness and guidance. There is no atom in the heavens or on earth, or in between them but therewith Allah Almighty lets astray whomever He likes, and guides whomever He likes. Whoever reflects on those things only as being the act and making of Allah Almighty would profit the gnosis of the glory and majesty of Allah Almighty, and be guided aright; and whoever reflects on them as being acts and things effecting each other more than being related with the Causer of the causes, would be wretched and go astray.

We seek refuge with Allah Almighty from error and from falling in the slips of the ignorant, by virtue of His grace, favor, generosity, bounty and mercy.

That is the end of the ninth book of the Revival, all perfect praise be to Allah Alone; and Allah's blessing and peace be upon Muhammad, his family and companions. Next, Allah willing, is the book of death and hereafter with which the whole series is concluded.

Book ten:remembrance of Death and hereafter life

It is the tenth book of the quarter of saviors in the revival of religion sciences

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All perfect praise be to Allah, Who smashed, by death, the necks of the tyrants, and broke the backs of the Khosraus and Caesars, whose hearts remained heedless of the remembrance of death until the true promise came to them and threw them into the holes, thereby they were moved from palaces to tombs, from the light of the cradles to the darkness of the graves, from playing with girls and boys to suffering from insects and larva, from enjoyment of food and drink to rolling in the earth and dust, from company to loneliness, and from the soft beds and thrones to the harmful lying places. Consider then: Have they been able to protect and safeguard themselves from death? Consider also, do you sense the existence of anyone of them or hear his voice?

Exalted be He Who possesses the power over all things, and is Alone worthy of eternal survival thereby He humiliated all the others by what He doomed to them of death and nonexistence, and made death salvation for the pious and a promise for them to meet Him Almighty, and made the grave a narrow prison for the wretched up to the Day of Recompense and Judgement. His is the bestowal of apparent and hidden favors, and He has the right to exact retribution (from whomever He likes) with oppressive vengeance, and to Him be all thanks in the heavens and the earth, and all perfect praise be to Him in the world and the hereafter.

Allah's blessing and peace, as much as is fitting, be upon Muhammad, the master of apparent and evident marvels, and brilliant and outstanding signs, and upon his family and companions. Coming to the point:

It is fitting for him who is doomed to death, not to meditate, nor to remember, nor to get ready, nor to expect but for death, and he is more entitled to regard himself among the dead, and see it among the inhabitants of the graves. Everything to come is very near, and what is far never comes. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The intelligent is he who mortifies himself and works for the life to come after death; and the foolish is he who follows his own desires, and hopes from Allah (to reward him)." One could not find it easy to get ready for a thing unless its remembrance is renewed in his heart, and the remembrance is renewed only when one pays attention to the reminder when it is mentioned. In this respect, we are going to mention what a servant should know, by way of remembrance continually, the matter of death, its preceding and succeeding events, the states of the hereafter and resurrection, Paradise and Hell, in order to help him get ready for death. Indeed, departure from this world has become near, and only a little in the lifetime that remains, although the people are heedless of that: "Closer and closer to mankind comes their Reckoning: yet they heed not and they turn away." (Al-Anbiya' 1)

﴿ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴾

Let us mention the issues related to death in two parts.

Part one: what precedes and succeeds death to the sounding of the trumpet

It contains eight chapters:

Chapter one: Excellence of remembrance of death and exhortation to remember it.

Chapter two: Remembrance of long and short hope.

Chapter three: Remembrance of death agonies and difficulties.

Chapter four: The death of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and his rightly-guided successors after him.

Chapter five: The speech of such as on the threshold of death, from among the rulers and righteous.

Chapter six: Opinions of the learned about funerals and graves, and ruling on visiting graves.

Chapter seven: The real nature of death, and what the dead receives in the grave until the trumpet is sounded.

Chapter eight: Concerning what is known about the states of the dead by revelation in the dreams (of the living).

CHAPTER ONE

EXCELLENCE OF REMEMBRANCE OF DEATH AND EXHORTATION TO REMEMBER IT

It should be known to you that such as involved in this world, and engaged in its deceiving desires and delights are heedless of the death, and whenever it is mentioned to them, they would have aversion for it. It is those in connection with whom Allah Almighty said: "Say: "The Death from which you flee will truly overtake you: then will you be sent back to the Knower of things secret and open: and He will tell you (the truth of) the things that you did!" (Al-Jumu'ah 8)

﴿ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَـٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَـٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

In this respect, the people are either involved (in the world), a beginning repentant, or an advanced Gnostic.

As for him who is wholeheartedly involved in this world, he rarely remembers death, and even were he to remember it, he does so in sigh for what he missed of his world, and he always mentions it simply in order to blame it. The mention of death does but increases such one in remoteness from Allah Almighty.

As for the repentant, he more often remembers death in order for fear to be stimulated in his heart, which helps him fulfill the requirements of repentance to the best. If he dislikes death, he does so for fear it would snatch him before completing his repentance and mending his provision. He indeed is excused for

that aversion he might have for death. Such is not included under the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Whoever dislikes to meet Allah, Allah dislikes to meet him." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah). He does not dislike death for he dislikes to meet Allah Almighty in so much as he dislikes death for fear he might lose the meeting with Allah because of his shortage and indulgence. The distinctive sign for that is to be relentlessly engaged in getting ready for that meeting, otherwise, he would be joined with the one who is involved in the pleasures and delights of this world.

As for the Gnostic, he always remembers death for it is his appointment with his Beloved, and the lover never forgets his appointment with his beloved. Such a person, more often, feels death is too slow to come to him, for he likes it to come soon, in order to get rid of the abode of the disobedient and move to the neighbourhood of the Lord of the worlds. In this connection, it is narrated that when death approach Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him" he said: "A beloved has come while being in a state of destitution: never prospers such as regrets. O Allah! If You know that poverty is dearer to me than richness, sickness than health, and death than living, then, make death easy on me until I meet You."

The repentant then is excused for his aversion for death, and the Gnostic is excused for his love and hope for death. Higher than both in rank is he who entrusts his affair to Allah Almighty, and prefers for himself neither death nor living: on the contrary, the dearer to him is that which is the dearer to his Lord Almighty. That person, by his excessive love and alliance, attains the station of submission and contentment, which is the farthest finale. Anyway, the remembrance of death is rewardable and meritorious, even for the one who is involved in the pleasures of this world, for it helps him desert the life, since it embitters upon him the delights of this world; and anything which embitters upon one his desires and pleasures is among the means of salvation.

Explication Of Excellence Of Remembrance Of Death

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Remember, more often, (death) the destroyer of pleasures." (At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Were animals to know about death what mankind know, you would never have eaten anything thereof." (Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Umm Habibah Al-Juhaniyyah).

It is narrated on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: "O Messenger of Allah! Would there be anyone to be mustered in the company of the martyrs?" He said: "Yes, whoever remembers death twenty times per night and day." That superiority goes back to the fact that remembrance of death causes desertion from this world, and imposes readiness for the abode of the hereafter, whereas heedlessness of death invites to involvement in the desires and pleasures of the world.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Death is the gift of the faithful believer." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya, At-Tabarani

and Al-Hakim on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar). That is because the world is the believer's prison, in which he persists in suffering and difficulty of resisting his desires and appetencies, and averting his Satan; and death releases him from that torment.

The Prophet "peace be upon him" said too: "Death is expiation for every Muslim." (Abu Na'im, Al-Baihaqi and Al-Khatib on the authority of Anas). The Muslim intended here is the true believer, from the evil of whose tongue and the harm of whose hand the Muslims are safe, and who has the good manners of the faithful believers, and is not contaminated from disobedience but with the minor sins. Death purifies him from them, and plots them out so long as he avoids the major sins and establishes the obligatory duties.

It is further narrated on the authority of Ata' Al-Khurasani that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came upon a gathering of people who were laughing so much loudly, thereupon he said to them: "Mix your gathering with the remembrance of the disturber of pleasures." They asked: "What is the disturber of pleasures O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Death." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Remember death , more often, for it purifies from sins and causes abstinence from this world." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Sufficient is death for a separator (of people from each other)." (Al-Harith Ibn Abu Usamah on the authority of Anas).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Sufficient is death for a preacher." (Al-Baihaqi and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ammar Ibn Yasir).

It is also narrated that once the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out to the mosque and found some people sitting there, and they were engaged in talk and laughter, thereupon he said to them: "Remember death! Behold! By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, were you to know what I know, you would laugh little and weep much." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Ibn Umar).

On another occasion, a mention was made of a man to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and they appreciated him so much. He asked them: "How does your companion remember death?" they said: "We have almost never heard him remembering death." On that he said: "Then, your companion is not fitting (for your appreciation)." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Anas; and Ibn Al-Mubarak).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: I went to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in the company of nine and I was the tenth of them. A man from the Ansar asked him: "Who is the most intelligent among the people O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Who remembers death most among them, and gets ready for it most among them: those are the most intelligent among men for they have

combined both the honor of this world, and the dignity of the hereafter." (Ibn Majah and Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

From among the traditions, a mention may be made of the statement of Al-Hassan: "Death has scandalized the world and left no joy for such of men as endued with sound minds."

According to Ar-Rabie Ibn Khuthaim: "There is no absent which a faithful believer waits better for him than death." He said once again: "Let none sense of my death, and rather hand me over to my Lord stealthily."

A wise man wrote the following to one of his brothers: "O my brother! Be careful of death in this abode before you go to an abode in which you would hope for death, but you could not find it."

It was the habit of Ibn Sirin that whenever a mention of death was made in his presence, every part of his body would become motionless as if it died.

It was also the habit of Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz to gather the juristic scholars and learned every night in order to remember death, resurrection and the hereafter until they would weep so much as if they were attending a funeral procession.

According to Ibrahim At-Taimi: "Two things have interrupted upon me the pleasures of this world: Remembrance of death, and standing in front of Allah."

According to Ka'b: "Whoever knows death (as it should be known), all calamities and anxieties of this world become insignificant in his sight."

It is narrated on the authority of Safiyyah "Allah be pleased with her" that a woman came to complain to A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" about the harshness of her heart, thereupon she said to her: "Remember death more often, perchance your heart would become soft." She did accordingly, and her heart turned soft. She returned to thank A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her."

It was the habit of Jesus "peace be upon him" that whenever a mention of death was made in his presence, his skin would dribble blood.

It was the habit of David "peace be upon him" that whenever death and resurrection were mentioned in his presence, he would go on weeping so much that his joints would be about to dislocate; and whenever mercy was mentioned to him, he would restore his original state.

Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz asked a religious scholar to admonish him thereupon he said to him: "You would not be the first caliph to die." He said: "Give me more." He said: "There were none of your fathers up to Adam "peace be upon him" but that he tasted death; and now it is your turn." Umar then wept so much for that.

Ar-Rabie Ibn Khuthaim was reported to have dug a grave in his house in which he slept many times every night in order to persist in remembrance of death. He said in this respect: "If the remembrance of death leaves my heart even for a single hour, it would corrupt."

According to Mutarrif Ibn Abdullah Ibn Ash-Shakhir: "Death indeed has embittered upon the people of bliss their bliss. Seek then bliss, if you could, in which there is no embitterment."

Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz said to Anbasah: "Remember death more often: if your living is abundant, it would constrict it upon you; and if your living is constricted, it would enlarge it upon you."

Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani said: I asked Umm Harun: "Do you like death?" she answered in the negative. I asked her why and she said: "If I disobey anyone of mankind, I would have no longing for meeting him. Then, how should I like to meet Him (Allah) since I disobey Him?"

Explication Of The Way To Remember Death

It should be known to you that death is of great risk and danger, and those who are heedless of death are so because they neither meditate in nor remember it; and even such as remembers it does not remember it with his heart disengaged from worldly desires. For this reason, the remembrance of death has no impression upon his heart.

The way to remember death with verification is first to disengage one's heart from anything except for remembrance of death that is ahead of him. Once he persists in remembering death, it would influence on his heart, and consequently his joy and pleasure with this world would decrease and his heart would get broken. The most effective way to that is to remember, more often, his fellows who preceded him to death, and how they turned into corpses under the earth, exposed to insects and larva, leaving behind them all their property they gathered, and children and families they had, and how they were heedless of death when it attacked them suddenly and they expected it not. At this point, let him consider his own self, and how he is heedless like them, and his consequence would be like theirs.

According to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him": "When you remember the dead, regard yourself as one of them."

According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "The happy is he who is admonished by the state of the other."

According to Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz: "Do you not see that you prepare, every morning and evening, somebody to go to Allah Almighty, whom you place in a hole under the earth, taking dust as a cushion, leaving behind him his beloved, and cutting all means and relations with this world?".

To persist in those thoughts, along with entering the graves and seeing the patients renews remembrance of death in the heart until it prevails over one and becomes always before his eyes. At that point, one is about to dedicate himself to it, and desert the abode of deception, otherwise, to remember death only with tongue is of no significance and very little impact on the heart. If he is pleased with anything in this world, let him remember, at once, that he is going to leave it.

Once Ibn Muti' looked at his house and admired it so much. But a short while later, he wept so much and said: "By Allah, had it not been for death, I would have been pleased with you; and had it not been for the fact that we are going to be buried in the narrow graves, we would have got comforted with this world." Then, he wept more until his voice raised high.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCERNING LONG HOPE; AND EXCELLENCE OF SHORT HOPE; AND WHY IT IS LONG; AND HOW IT IS REMEDIED

Excellence Of Short Hope

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with

them" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to him: "When you are in the morning, think not about the evening, and when you are in the evening, think not about the morning (of the next day); and take from your life provision that benefits you in your death, and from your health what benefits you during your sickness, for you do not know, O Abdullah, what you would be in the morrow." (Ibn Hibban and Al-Bukhari).

It is further narrated on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "What I fear for you most is two things: Following inclination and the long hope. As for following inclination, it keeps off the truth; and as for the long hope, it is the love for this world." Then he "peace be upon him" resumed: "Behold! Allah Almighty gives the world to whomever He likes as well as to whomever He dislikes, and if He likes a servant, He gives him only faith. Behold! Religion has its men and the world has its men. So, be among the men of the religion, and be not among the men of the world. Behold! This world is about to leave, turning its back to you. Behold! The hereafter is about to come, turning its face towards you. Behold! You (in this world) are on a day of work on which there is no reckoning. Behold! You are about to go to a day of reckoning on which there would be no work." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is further narrated on the authority of Umm Al-Mundhir "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: One evening, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" looked at the people and said: "Do you not feel shy of Allah?" they asked: "What is the matter O Messenger of Allah?" he said: "You gather (wealth) which you devour not, hope (for things) which you realize not, and build (houses in) which you live not." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: Usamah Ibn Zaid bought from Zaid Ibn Thabit a slave-girl by one hundred Dinar on credit for a month, thereupon I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "Do you not wonder at Usamah that he has bought on credit for a month? Verily, Usamah is of a long hope! By Him in Whose Hand is my life, my eyes have never twinkled but that I thought both eyelids would not close together before Allah takes my soul (by death), nor have I raised my limb but that I thought I would not put it down once again before I die, nor have I taken a morsel of food but that I thought I would not swallow it before I get choked out of death." Then he "peace be upon him" said: "O mankind! If you have sound minds, then, regard yourselves among the dead. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, what you are promised would inevitably come, and you never frustrate (the power and will of Allah)." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to come out to urinate and then clean himself with dust. I said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! Water is close to you." On that he said: "What makes me know that I would (have respite to) reach it?" (Ibn Al-Mubarak, Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Al-Bazzar).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" picked up three sticks and fixed one of them in front of him, another beside it and the third far from them. He said: "Do you know which thing this represents?" they said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." On that he said: "The first represents man, the second his appointed term (death), and the third the hope, and while the son of Adam lives in his hope, death attacks him before he realizes his hope." (Ahmad and Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The son of Adam has ninety-nine deaths awaiting him: if all of them miss him, of a surety, the old age would befall him." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Ash-Shakhir).

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" drew a square and then drew a line in the middle of it and let it extend outside the square and then drew several small lines attached to that central line, and said: "This is the human being, and this (the square) in his lease of life, encircles him from all sides (or has encircled him), and this (line), which is outside (the square), is his hope, and these small lines are the calamities and troubles (which may befall him), and if one misses him, another will snap him, and if the other misses him, a third will snap him." (Al-Bukhari).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The son of Adam grows old and two characteristics remain with him: greediness (for wealth) and hope (for long life)." (Muslim).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The first generation of this (Muslim) Ummah was saved by certainty (of faith) and abstinence (in this world), and the last generation of it would be given to destruction because of niggardliness and hope." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Amr Ibn Shu'aib from his father from his grandfather).

It is narrated that while Jesus "peace be upon him" was sitting, there was an old man working with his spade therewith he was raising dust. Jesus "peace be upon him" said (by way of supplication): "O Allah! Remove hope from his heart." On that the old man threw the spade and lay on his back for an hour. Then Jesus "peace be upon him" said once again: "O Allah! Restore hope to his heart." On that the old man stood and started working with the spade once again. Jesus "peace be upon him" asked him about the reason for that, thereupon he said: "While I was working with the spade, my self said to me: 'To which time are you going to work given that you are an old man?' I then threw the spade and lay on my back. But some time later my self said to me once again: 'By Allah, you should continue to earn your living so long as you survive.' On that I stood up and took the spade and started working."

It is narrated on the authority of Al-Hassan: "Does all of you like to enter Paradise?" they said: "Yes O Messenger of Allah." On that he said: "Then, make short your hopes, put your appointed terms ahead of you, and feel shy of Allah Almighty." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say in his supplication: "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from world that prevents the good of the hereafter; and I seek refuge with You from life that prevents the good of the death; and I seek refuge with You from hope that prevents the good of the deed." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Hawshab direct from the Prophet "peace be upon him").

From among the traditions, a mention may be made of the statement of Mutarrif Ibn Abdullah: "Were I to know when my appointed term (of death) would be, I would fear for myself the loss of my mind. But Allah Almighty conferred upon His servants the favor of heedlessness of death; and had it not been for such heedlessness, they would not have been blessed in living, nor would markets have been established between them."

According to Al-Hassan: "Forgetfulness and hope are great favors Allah bestowed upon mankind, otherwise, by Allah, Muslims would not have been able to walk in the streets."

According to Ath-Thawri: "I was informed that man was created as foolish, and had it not been for this fact, he would not have been blessed in living."

According to Abu Sa'id Ibn Abd-Ar-Rahman: "The world has been inhabited only by virtue of the lack of mind of its inhabitants."

According to Salman Al-Farisi "Allah be pleased with him": "Three things raised my attention and caused me to laugh: the hopeful for this world whom death invites, a heedless, of whom death is not heedless, and a laughing one who does not know whether Allah, the Lord of the worlds is displeased or pleased with him. furthermore, other three things aggrieved me and caused me to weep: Departure of the beloved, Muhammad "peace be upon him" and his party, the terror of the standing in front of Allah Almighty, and I do not know whether to Paradise or to Hell I would be admitted."

A righteous one said: I saw Zurarah Ibn Abu Awfa "Allah be pleased with him" in a dream after his death and I asked him: "Which deed is the most effective among you?" He said: "Reliance (on Allah) and short hope."

According to Ath-Thawri: "Abstinence from this world is to have short hope. It is not to eat the rough of food nor to put on the coarse of garments."

It is reported that Al-Mufaddal Ibn Fadalah asked his Lord Almighty to remove hope from him thereupon the appetite for food and drink vanished from him. Then, he invoked his Lord once again to restore hope to him, thereupon the appetite for food and drink returned to him once again.

It was said to Al-Hassan: "Do you not wash your shirt O Abu Sa'id?" he said: "The matter (of death) comes sooner than (to have a respite for) this." According to Al-Hassan: "Death lies in your forelocks, and the world is folded behind you."

According to a wise man: "I am like a man stretching his neck and the sword (of death) is awaiting him, when to chop off his head."

According to Dawud At-Ta'i: "Were I to hope to live for a month, surely, I would bring great things. But even, how should I have such a hope and I see distresses striking the people at any moment during night and day?"

A person wrote the following to his brother (in the religion of Allah):

"Coming to the point: The world is but a dream, and the hereafter wakefulness, and death is in the midway between them; and we are now living in A confused medley of dreams. And peace be upon you."

According to Al-Hassan: "Before Adam "peace be upon him" erred, his hope (for life) was behind his back and his appointed term (of death) in front of him. But when he erred, he turned to the opposite, and made his hope (for life) in front of him, and his appointed term (of death) behind his back."

It is reported on the authority of Abu Zakariyya At-Taimi that while Sulaiman Ibn Abd-Al-Malik was in the mosque, a stone with inscription was brought to him and Wahb Ibn Munabbih was invited to read it for him and it went as follows: "O son of Adam! Were you to see how close you are to your appointed term, surely, you would abstain in your long hope (you have for this life), desire for increase in your deed, and shorten your greediness and trickery. If your foot slips, it is your regret which would inevitably receive you in the morrow: You would neither be able to return to your world, nor to add anything to your good deeds. So, doo deeds (as much as you could) for the Day of Judgement before the coming of regret and grief." On that Sulaiman wept so much excessively.

Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz addressed the people with a sermon in which he praised Allah and lauded Him and then said: "O people! You have not been created in idle sport, but you have a place of return where Allah Almighty would gather you to decide among you, and you would be superior to each other (by virtue of your deeds): Failing and wretched in the morrow would be a servant whom Allah drives away from His mercy which extends over all things, and from His Paradise whose breadth is equal to the breadth of the heavens and the earth. Safety in the morrow would be for him who fears Allah, and sells the little for the much, the perishable for the never-ending, and the wretchedness for the happiness. do you not see that you are going to join the ruined, and others would succeed you in this world? Do you not see that every morning and evening you send off a dead whose hope for and relation with life have been cut off and you place him underneath the earth, leaving him alone to face reckoning? By Allah, I say this statement of mine and know with certainty that there is none among you more sinful than I. But it is out of the established way of Allah to enjoin upon you to obey Him and forbid you to disobey Him." Then, he prayed for forgiveness of Allah and placed the sleeve of his garment over his face and went on weeping so much until his tears wetted his beard. After that sermon, he did not return to his gathering once again until he died.

According to Al-Qa'qa' Ibn Hakim: "I have got ready for death since thirty years, and should it come to me now, I would not like to change anything to make it after another."

According to Ath-Thawri: I saw an old man in the mosque of Kufah saying: "I have been sitting here in this mosque for thirty years, in expectation for death to attack me, and should it come to me now, I would neither command myself to do anything, nor forbid it from anything, nor do I have a right upon anyone, nor does anyone have a right upon me."

Abu Muhammad Ibn Ali Az-Zahid said: We set out to follow a funeral procession in Basrah, and Dawud At-Ta'i was among us. Then, he withdrew and sat on one side while the dead body was being buried. I came and sat near him. He addressed me saying: "Whoever fears the threat, the far would become close to him; and the more one's hope is long, the more his deed is weak; and everything to come is very close. It should be known to you, O brother, that everything which occupies you from your Lord Almighty is a cause of pessimism upon you. It should be known also that all the inhabitants of this world are going to be among the inhabitants of the graves. But the inhabitants of the graves regret for what they leave behind, and rejoice at what they send forward. What the inhabitants of the graves regret for is the same for which the inhabitants of the world fight each other, over which they compete each other, and on which they dispute with each other in the courts."

It is reported that Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi pronounced Iqamah for prayer and asked Muhammad Ibn Abu Tawbah to proceed on to lead the prayer, thereupon he said to him: "If I lead you in this prayer, I would not lead you in any prayer afterwards." He said: "Do you talk to yourself that you would (live until you) offer another prayer? We seek refuge with Allah from the long hope, for it prevents the good of the deed."

Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz said to the people in his sermon: "This world is not the abode of your stability. But it is an abode which Allah Almighty doomed to perish, and doomed its inhabitants to leave it. How many a strong building which is going to be ruined a few moments later, and how many a joyful resident who is going to leave a short time later. So, make good your journey on it, may Allah have mercy upon you, and take provision, for the best provision is piety. The world is like a shade which has shrunk and gradually vanished. While mankind was competing in this world, Allah Almighty invited him, according to what is doomed to him, and threw him by death, therewith his traces and good things he has made and gained in his world were taken away from him, and given to others than him. The world never pleases in so much as harms: it pleases little and aggrieves much."

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" used to say in his sermon: "Where are the good-looking people who were fond of their youth? Where are the kings who built the cities and fortified them with strong walls and fences? Where are those who used to emerge victorious in the battlefields? All of them went away and became in the darkness of the graves. We ask for salvation."

Explication Of Why Hope Is Long, And Its Remedy

It should be known to you that there are two reasons for the long hope: one is ignorance, and the other is the love for this world.

As far as the love for this world is concerned, it is that if he is affable with it, its desires, delights, pleasures, and occupations, it becomes too heavy on him to leave it. Thus, his heart refrains from meditation in death, which is the means to leave it. However, whoever dislikes a thing averts it from himself. Man always has nostalgia for the false wishes: He wishes only for what agrees with his ambition, and it is only his survival in this world that agrees with his

ambition. He continues to imagine it and estimate it within himself, along with the subsequents of his survival therein, and needs of property, family, children, and all means of sustenance in it. He devotes himself to meditation in that only, which diverts him from the remembrance of death, and consideration of its closeness in time to him.

If, by chance, the idea of death occurs to his mind, and his need to get ready for it, he would soon procrastinate it and gives to himself false promises saying to it: "There are still many days ahead of you until you grow old and then you could repent." When he grows up, he would say: "Postpone repentance until you become an old man." But when he becomes an old man, he would say: "Take respite until you finish from building this house and inhabiting that estate, or until you return from that journey or from preparation of your child (for marriage), or from defeating that enemy which teases you…"and so on he delays it day after day, and each occupation leads him to another, until death snatches him at a time he thinks it not, causing his grief to be very long.

The cry of the majority of the denizens of the fire of Hell results from that procrastination. Such person is ignorant of the fact that what invites him to procrastination at present would be with him in the future. He thinks, though falsely, that one day he would be able to disengage himself from it. But nonsense! None has the power to disengage himself from it but he who is careless of it. these false wishes go back to the love for this world, and heedlessness of the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Love whomever you love, for you would inevitably leave him."

As for ignorance, it is that man might rely on his youth, because of which he regards death too far to come to him. But this little man does not think that death could easily attack anyone in his very youth. He also might regard death too far to come because of his good health, given that it is not unlikely that death might overtake him suddenly. If that poor person thinks that death has no specific time to come, of course, he might feel it and engage in getting ready for it. but it is ignorance of those facts on the one hand, and his love for the world on the other hand that invite him to make long his hope, and be heedless of considering the closeness of death to him. Such a man thinks that although death is surrounding him, as it befalls others, he never imagines it to befall him. The way to remedy that is to compare himself with others and know that death would inevitably befall him as it befalls others. His procrastination, from this perspective then, is quite ignorance.

If you know that all of this goes back to those two causes, i.e. ignorance and love for this world, you should then learn that The way of remedy is to remove these causes that lead to it. as for ignorance, it might be averted by pure meditation with the full presence of the heart, and hearing the instructive wisdom from the pure hearts.

As for the love for this world, to remove it from the heart is very difficult since it is the chronic disease, whose remedy wearied the first and last generations. There is no remedy for it except to have faith in the Last Day and its

formidable punishment and abundant reward. Once he is certain of that, the love for this world leaves his heart, because the love for what is serious always removes from the heart the love for what is despicable. If he sees how the world is despicable in comparison with the hereafter which is valuable, surely, he would disdain from turning to the world, even if the kingdom of the whole earth from the East to the West was given to him. How then if he has from the world only the little? We ask Allah Almighty to show to us the world as He showed it to the righteous among His servants.

There is no remedy to consider death in the heart but to think about the dead among one's fellows and kinship, and how death attacked them at a time they thought it not. Whoever got ready for it has indeed attained a great felicity; and whoever was deceived by the long hope has indeed received an evident loss.

Let one then think about his parts of body, and how they would be exposed, after death, to the insects and larva, and nothing in himself would remain except for beneficial knowledge and righteous deed which he did only with sincerity to the Countenance of Allah Almighty. Let him also think about the punishment of the grave, as we will show later, resurrection and terrors of the Day of Judgement, etc. It is the like of those ideas which renew the remembrance of death in his heart, and invite him to get ready for it.

Explication Of The Different Ranks Of People Concerning Long And Short Hopes

It should be known to you that people are different in this issue. Let us sum up them as follows:

Some of them hope for long survival, which they desire forever. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: "You will indeed find them, of all people, most greedy of life, even more than the idolaters: each one of them wishes he could be given a life of a thousand years." (Al-Baqarah 96)

﴿ وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ ٱلنَّاسِ عَلَىٰ حَيَوٰةٍ وَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ﴾

Some others wish to survive as long as to reach the old age, and that is the farthest point of lifetime one sees; and that person loves the world so much excessively. In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The old man's heart is that of a youth in love for two things: the long life and greediness for property." (Both Sahihs on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Others wish to life only for a year, and do not engage in preparing their livelihood for what is beyond it: In the summer, one prepares his things until the next winter, and in the winter, he does the same until the next summer and so on. Once he gathers what sustains him for a year, he engages in worship.

Some of them hope to life only for a season, and no more: one of them neither saves in the summer the garment of the winter, nor does he save in the winter the garment of the summer.

Some of them reduce their hope only to a day and a night: such prepares only what sustains him during his day and not until tomorrow. Jesus "peace be upon

him" said: "Do not care about the morrow: If it is added to your lifetime, then, you would receive your sustenance on it, otherwise, care not about the lifetime of anyone other than you."

Some of them have their hope as short as no more than an hour, as confirmed by our Prophet "peace be upon him" when he said to Abdullah Ibn Umar: "When you are in the morning, think not about the evening, and when you are in the evening, think not about the morning (of the next day)."

Some of them do not estimate to live even for an hour. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" sometimes practiced Tayammum, although he might find water within less than an hour saying: "It may be that I would (die before I) reach it."

Some of them make death ahead of them, as if it awaits to befall anyone of them at any moment. It is that man who offers the prayer of such as bids farewell to this world. It is in connection with him that Mu'adh Ibn Jabal "Allah be pleased with him" replied to the question of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when he asked him about the real nature of his faith, thereupon he said: "I never take a step but that I think I would not be able to follow it with another (because of death)." (Abu Na'im in his Hilyah on the authority of Anas). It is further reported from Al-Aswad, and he was an Abyssinian, that he was offering prayer at night, during which he was looking sideways. It was said to him: "What is the matter with you?" He said: "I look at the angel of death from which direction he would come to me."

Those are the different ranks of the people concerning their hope; and each has his specific degree with Allah Almighty. Of course, such as whose hope is reduced to less than a month is not like him whose hope is as long as a month and a day: There is difference between them in degree with Allah Almighty, for never does Allah deal unjustly with anyone even in the least, and whoever does an atom's weight of good would inevitably see it.

Therefore, the trace of the short hope appears more evident in the way one hastens to work. Everyone claims his hope is short and he is a liar, his falsehood appears clear in his deeds. He might take care of means which he does not need along a year, and this signifies that his hope is not short as he claims. The sign of success is to make death ahead of him, of which he is not heedless even for a single moment. So, let him get ready for the death which awaits him at present time: If he lives to the evening, let him thank Allah Almighty for his obedience to Him and wasting not his day, and then do the same in the evening until morning, and so on. That is easy but only on him who disengages his heart from the morrow and what would be on it. if such a person dies, he would be happy and gainful, and if he lives, he would be pleased with his good readiness and the pleasure of his private talk (with Allah). Death is happiness for him, and life is addition of good to his account.

Explication Of The Necessity To Hasten To Work And Caution Of The Evil Of Delay

It should be known to you that if one has two absent brothers, one of whom is expected to come in the next morning, and the other within a month, surely, he

would not get ready to receive the one whose expected arrival is far before the one whose expected arrival is near. Whoever expects death to come after a year, would engage in the term itself and forget what is beyond it, which prevents him from hastening to work, as he sees respite for him to delay the work as he likes. In this connection, it is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Hasten to do (good deeds) before (the coming of) seven (things): Do you expect but poverty that causes one to forget (any other engagement), richness that causes one to transgress all due bounds, sickness that corrupts (body or religion), old age that brings about senility (by which one might deviate from right), swift destructive death, (the affliction of) Ad-Dajjal, and it is absent, though expected evil, or the Hour (of Judgment), and the Hour is more disastrous and more bitter?" (At-Tirmidhi).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "may Allah be pleased with them" that the Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said to a man while instructing him: "Avail yourself of five (good benefits you have) before (the coming of) five (evils you would suffer from): (avail yourself of) your youth before (the coming of) your old age, your health before (the coming of) your illness, your richness before (the coming of) your poverty, your disengagement before (the coming of) your occupation, and your life before (the coming of) your death." (Al-Hakim).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "A lot of people are given to loss in two favors: Health and vacation." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Ibn Abbas). It means they never avail themselves of those things until when they pass, they feel of their great value.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever fears (to be exposed to the assault of Satan) let him proceed on the way (to the hereafter straightly to be safe from him), and whoever proceeds on the way (to the hereafter directly) would necessarily attain the position he seeks for. Behold! The commodity of Allah is very expensive! Behold! The (price of the) commodity of Allah is Paradise!" (At-Tirmidhi).

It was the habit of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that whenever he sensed any portion of heedlessness or conceit from his companions, he would called them with a high voice: "Death would necessarily and inevitably come to you, either with wretchedness or with happiness." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Zaid As-Sulaimi).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I am a warner (of evil), death is a raider, and the Hour (of Judgement) is your appointment." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: One day the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out when the sun was almost setting thereupon he said: "Nothing of this world remains except as little as is equal to the remaining portion of that day

compared with what passed thereof." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The example of this world is like a garment that has been divided from its first to its last except for a thin thread at its end by which it is still connected, and this thread is about to be cut." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Anas).

It is further narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: Whenever the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" delivered his speech in which he made a mention of the Hour (of Judgement), he would raise his voice and his cheeks turn red, as if he were a warner of an army, saying: "I have warned you in the morning and evening. Behold! I have been sent (as a Messenger) and the Hour (of Judgement) as close to each other as are those", and he would join his fingers. (Muslim and Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is further narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited the following Qur'anic Verse: "Those whom Allah (in His plan) wills to guide, He opens their breast to Islam; those whom He wills to leave straying, He makes their breast close and constricted." (Al-An'am 125)

﴿ فَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَهْدِيَهُۥ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ (125) ﴾

Then he commented: "Once the light (of faith) enters the breast, it would be made spacious for it to come in." it was said: "O Messenger of Allah! Is there any sign indicative of that?" he "peace be upon him" said: "Yes, it is to desert the abode of deception (the world), turn to the abode of eternity (hereafter), and get ready for death before it comes."

In his comment on the following Qur'anic statement: "He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed; and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving" (Al-Mulk 2)

﴿ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْغَفُورُ (2) ﴾

As-Suddi said: "It means to try you as to which among you remembers death most, gets ready for it best, and fears and bewares of it most."

According to Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him": Every morning and evening, a caller calls: "O people! Remember the departure! Remember the departure!" in confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: "This is but one of the mighty (Portents), A warning to mankind, To any of you that chooses to press forward, or to follow behind." (Al-Muddaththir 35-37)

﴿ إِنَّهَا لَإِحْدَى ٱلْكُبَرِ (35) نَذِيرًا لِّلْبَشَرِ (36) لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمْ أَن يَتَقَدَّمَ أَوْ يَتَأَخَّرَ (37) ﴾

According to Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him": "Deliberation is good in all things except in the deeds of righteousness to the hereafter (which one should hasten to do)."

Al-Hassan used to say in his admonition: "Hasten (to good)! Hasten (to good)! (What relates you with this world) is only the breaths and once they stop, you would die and your deeds therewith you come close to Allah Almighty would cease from you. May Allah have mercy upon such as looks at himself and weeps

for the number of his sins." Then he recited the following Holy Verse: "So make no haste against them, for We but count out to them a (limited) number (of days)." (Maryam 84)

﴿ فَلَا تَعْجَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّمَا نَعُدُّ لَهُمْ عَدًّا ﴾

"It refers to the limited number of breaths: the last breath is the coming out of your soul. The last number is your departure from your family, and entering your grave."

It is reported that Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari "Allah be pleased with him" tired himself so much in worship towards the end of his life, and it was said to him: "Would that you are kind and gentle to yourself!" on that he said: "If horses are launched in race and they come close to the end, they would exert as much effort as is within their capacity; and what remains of my lifetime is lesser than what has passed thereof." He remained in such a state until he died.

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "but you led yourselves into temptation; you looked forward (to our ruin); you doubted (Allah's Promise); and (your false) desires deceived you; until there issued the Command of Allah. And the Deceiver deceived you in respect of Allah" (Al-Hadid 14)

﴿ يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانِيُّ حَتَّىٰ جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغَرُورُ ﴾

A commentator said: "It means you have tempted yourselves with desires and pleasures of this world, and then you looked forward to the repentance (of Allah upon you), and became in doubt until death came to you. That is because the deceiver, i.e. Satan, deceived you."

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "None of you gets up in the morning but that he is a guest (on this world), and what he has is but borrowed to him: The guest would necessary leave, and the borrowed thing should be given back to its real owner."

According to Al-Hassan: "Patiently persevere and be steadfast, for there remains only a few days and you are standing travelers, and death is about to invite anyone of you and he is going to respond quickly. So, move (from this world to the hereafter) with the good of what is present with you."

It is reported that Abu Ubaidah Al-Baji said: We visited Al-Hassan during his fatal illness in which he died thereupon he said to us: "Welcome to you. May Allah greet you with peace, and admit you and us to the abode of residence. That is a good assembly: If you patiently persevere and are true (to yourselves), and fear Allah Almighty, then, let not your fortune, may Allah have mercy upon you, from that only to hear the news with one ear and let it come out from the other. Whoever saw Muhammad "peace be upon him" saw him in the morning and evening having never placed a brick over another nor a pipe over another (for the purpose of building). But knowledge was raised to him and he endeavored to obtain it. we ask Allah for salvation. On which thing do you ascend? By the Lord of the Ka'bah, you have come, as if the matter were along

with the mercy of Allah Almighty, to a servant who has made his living only one, whose food is only a fragment (of bread), and garment only a piece of cloth, and he stuck to the ground and devoted himself wholeheartedly to worship, wept for his mistakes and sins, fled away from punishment, and sought the mercy of Allah, until his death would approach him while being in such a state."

Asim Al-Ahwal said: Fudail Ar-Raqashi said to me and I was begging him: "O man! Let not the great number of people divert you from yourself, for the matter (of death) approaches you alone from among them. Do not say 'Let me go here and there', thereupon wasting the day in vain. The matter is accounted and kept upon you, and you do not see anything much better and more beneficial than a new good deed to plot out therewith an old sin."

CHAPTER THREE

DEATH AGONIES AND DIFFICULTIES; AND WHAT IS FAVORABLE OF STATES WHENEVER IT COMES

It should be known to you that if a servant is to receive no calamities, nor distresses, nor disasters other than the death agonies and terrors, it would be more worthy to embitter his living upon him, and remove all joy and delight he might have in this world, and further cause him to make long his reflection on it, and become more ready and well-prepared for it, given that it is apt to receive death at every breath he takes. Luqman said to his son, for instance: "O my son! Since it (death) is a matter which you do not know when to meet it, then, get ready for it before it takes you aback." Wonder at one in the most pleasant delight in his life, remains in the thick of pain and anxiety just because he expects for the coming of a soldier into him simply to lash him a few number of lashes. Then, what about the expectation for the death angel at any moment of life, of which one might be heedless? Is it not an indication of his ignorance, arrogance and haughtiness?

Furthermore, it should be known to you that the pain of death agonies is not known in its reality but to him who experiences it, and anyone else knows it only by comparing it to what he experiences during his life. It is well known that the organ which has no spirit does not sense the pain. Then, it is the spirit that senses the pain. If any part of the body is injured, the spirit senses pain as much as is in proportion to that injury. Then, what about its pain if the injury is to affect the spirit directly? Death agony is severe pain that affects the whole spirit in entirety. That is why the pain of burning with the fire is more severe than the pain of injury. The death agony then is measured on that of burning. The one struck with a sword or a knife cries because there still remains some power in his heart and tongue, whereas the dead could not even cry for the death agony ruins the power of his body entirely, to the extent that in spite of his severe pain, he has no power to cry in expression of it.

If there still remains some power when his spirit is taken away from his body, a voice of lowing and gargling would be heard from him, and his colour would be changed and turn into that of dust, from which he was originally created. That is because the severe pain circulates in his body from the top to the bottom, from

the inside to the outside until his eyeballs raise, his lips and tongue shrink, his testicles raised up, and his fingers turn green. Then, each part of his body dies gradually, one after the other, beginning from his feet, then his legs, then his thighs, up to the end. Each part falls in demise one after another, until the soul comes up to the throat: At that time, his sight is cut off the world and its inhabitants, the gate of repentance is closed in his face, and he is encircled by all grief and regret.

In this respect, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The repentance of a servant continues to be accepted (by Allah) so long as he has not gargled yet." (At-Tirmidhi and rendered Hassan by Ibn Majah on the authority of Ibn Umar).

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "Of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil, until death faces one of them, and he says, "Now have I repented indeed"" (An-Nisa' 18)

﴿ وَلَيْسَتِ ٱلتَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّى تُبْتُ ٱلْـَٔـٰنَ ﴾

Mujahid said: "When he sees with his own eyes the messengers (of death), then, the countenance of the angel of death seems visible to him. Then, ask not about the bitterness and soreness of death, particularly when its agonies start to come upon one in succession.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say (by way of supplication): "O Allah! Make easy on Muhammad the agonies of death." But even, people do not seek refuge with Allah from it, nor do they regard it seriously, due to their ignorance of it. to be sure, things, before they occur, are perceived by the lights of Prophethood and alliance (with Allah). That is why the Prophets and allies (of Allah Almighty) feared so much of death, to the extent that Jesus "peace be upon him" said: "O assembly of disciples! Invoke Allah to make easy upon me that agony, i.e. of death."

It is reported that a group of the children of Israel came upon a graveyard and said to each other: "Would that you invoke Allah to bring out to you from that graveyard a deceased man to ask him about death agonies." They invoked Allah, and behold! There was a man standing in front of them, and the traces of prostration were visible in between his eyes, and he has just come out of one of those graves. He asked them: "O people! What do you want from me? I tasted death fifty years ago, and until now, the bitterness of death never has vanished from my heart."

A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" said: "I never envy anyone when the death agonies are easy on him after what I had seen from the severe agonies of death of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"."

It is reported that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say: "O Allah! You take the soul from between the nerves, bones and fingers. O Allah! Help me on death, and make it easy on me." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Sa'mah Ibn Ghailan Al-Ja'fi).

It is further reported on the authority of Al-Hassan from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that once he made a mention of death and its bitterness, soreness and pain, and said about it: "It is as strong as is

equal to three hundred sword strikes." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about death and its severity, thereupon he said: "The least degree of death is like a caltrop in a piece of wool: Should a caltrop come out of wool but that it has some thereof sticking to it?" (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Shahr Ibn Hawshab).

It is narrated that once the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" entered upon a patient during his last moments, and he said: "Indeed, I know well what he receives. There is no vein he has but that it feels the pain of death, with its severity." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Salman and Ubaid Ibn Umair).

It is reported that Ali "Allah be pleased with him" used to encourage his companions to fight their enemies saying: "If you are not killed (in fighting in the Cause of Allah), you would inevitably die anyway. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, one thousand sword strikes is easier on me than to die on bed."

According to Al-Awza'i: "We were reported that the deceased continues to sense the pain of death so long as he is still not resurrected from his grave."

According to Shaddad Ibn Aws "Allah be pleased with him": "Death is the greatest terror on the believer in the world and the hereafter; and it is more severe than sawing, filing and boiling. Were a deceased to be raised from his grave and tell the inhabitants of this world about death, they would have benefitted no living nor enjoyed any sleeping."

According to Zaid Ibn Aslam from his father: "If there still remains anything due on a believer to attain his degree in Paradise, which he has not attained by his deed, the agonies of death would be aggravated on him, in order to get therewith his degree in Paradise. If, contrastingly, there is a favor done by a disbeliever for which he has not been rewarded in this world, death agonies would be made easy on him in order to get the reward of his favor, and thus be led to the fire of Hell."

It is related from somebody that he used to ask a lot of patients about what pain they received from death agonies. When he himself fell fatally ill, he was asked about what he detected, thereupon he said: "It is as if heavens were folded on the earth, and my breath comes out of a needle's hole."

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The sudden death is a relief for a faithful believer and a grief for a wicked." (Ahmad on the authority of A'ishah).

It is narrated on the authority of Makhul from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that he said: "Were (the pain of) a single hair to be taken from a deceased and directed on the inhabitants of both the heavens and the earth, they would have died entirely, by permission of Allah Almighty, for death lies in each hair of the deceased; and never does death come upon anything but that it dies accordingly." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Abu Maisarah).

It is further reported that "were a single drop of death pain to be placed on all the mountains of the earth, all of them would have dissolved immediately."

It is reported that when Abraham "peace be upon him" died, Allah Almighty asked him: “How have you found death, O My intimate friend?” he said: “It is like a thorny skewer to be placed in a piece of wet wool, and then pulled therefrom.” On that He Almighty said to him: “No doubt, in spite of that, WE have made it easy on you.”

It is reported that when Moses "peace be upon him" died and his soul rose up to Allah Almighty, his Lord asked him: “How have you found death, O Moses?” he "peace be upon him" said: “I have found myself like a bird when it is being roasted on a roaster: it neither dies in order to get comforted, nor is saved to fly once again.”

It is reported from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that during his last breaths, he had a vessel of cold water, in which he dipped his hand and passed over his face, saying: “O Allah! Make easy on me the death agonies!” (both Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of A’ishah), and Fatimah "Allah be pleased with her" said: “How distressed am I for your distress O my father!” on that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “There would be no distress upon your father after today.” (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Anas).

It is reported that Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" said to Ka’b Al-Ahbar: “Relate to us about death O Ka’b.” he "Allah be pleased with him" said: “Well O Commander of Believers. Death is like a thorny branch to be placed into the inside of the body of a man, with each thorn sticking to a vein, and then it is pulled therefrom severely and violently, thereupon it takes what it takes and leaves what it leaves (from veins).”

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “While a servant is in the thick of distress and agonies of death, his joints bid farewell to each other saying: “Peace be upon you! I am going to leave you, and you are going to leave me to the Day of Judgement.” (Al-Iraqi on the authority of Abu Hadbah from Anas)

If those are the agonies of death in relation with the allies and devotees of Allah Almighty, then, what about us, given that we are involved in sins and mistakes? We receive the remaining calamities along with death agonies, for death calamities are three: the first is the difficulty and hardship of demise, as we have mentioned it.

The second calamity is to witness the image of the death angel, from which terror and fear enter the heart. If the greatest and the strongest of men sees his image while taking up the soul of a sinful servant, by no means would he endure it. it is reported that Abraham, the intimate friend "peace be upon him" said to the death angel: “Could you show me your image while taking up the soul of a wicked servant?” he said: “But you would not endure it.” he said: “Nay (I would do).” He said to him: “Then, turn your face away from me.” He did accordingly, , and when he turned to him once again, behold! He saw a dark hairy black-complexioned stinking man, putting on black clothing, and from whose mouth and nostrils the flame of fire and smoke coming out, thereupon Abraham "peace be upon him" fell unconscious. When he got up, the death angel has returned to

his first image. He said to the death angel: "If the wicked does not face, at his death, nothing but the image of your face, it would be very sufficient for him."

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that (The Prophet) David "peace be upon him" was a jealous man, and whenever he came out, he would shut the gates of his house (in order that none would enter in his absence). One day he came out and shut the gates and, by chance, while his wife was looking (from the window), she saw a man in the middle of the house. She said: "Who has admitted that man? If David should come and see him, he would punish him severely." When David "peace be upon him" returned and saw him, he asked him: "Who are you?" he said: "I am the one who never fears kings, nor is prevented by veils." David "peace be upon him" said to him: "You are then, by Allah, , the death angel." David "peace be upon him" then became motionless in his place. (Ahmad and Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is reported that Jesus "peace be upon him" came upon a skull and struck it with his foot and said: "Speak, by permission of Allah." It said: "O Spirit of Allah! I am the king of such and such a town in such and such a time. While I was sitting on my throne with my crown over my head, and my soldiers and retinue surrounding me, the death angel seemed to me and removed from me each organ solely and then my soul came out unto him."

It is only the disobedient men who suffer from that terror (of death agonies), and the Prophets and allies (of Allah) are relieved of it. It is related from the Prophets "peace be upon them" only the pain of demise, without the terror or fright to be perceived by him who witnesses the image of the death angel as such. If one sees it in a dream on one night, it would embitter on him his remaining life. then, what about seeing it in that very state (of death)?

As for the obedient, he sees him in the best and prettiest form. It is narrated on the authority of Ikrimah from Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that Abraham "peace be upon him" was a jealous man, and he had a house of worship, and whenever he came out, he would shut the door behind him (in order for none to intrude it in his absence). One day he returned and found a man in the middle of the house. He asked him: "Who has admitted you to my house?" he said: "Its (real) Lord has admitted me to it." He said: "I am its lord." He said: "It is the One who has more claim over it than you and me that has admitted me to it." He asked him: "Then, who are you from among the angels?" he said: "I am the angel of death." He said: "Could you show me your image in which you take up the soul of the believer?" he said: "Well, turn your face away from me." He did accordingly, and when he turned to him once again, behold! He saw a young man...and he mentioned of his prettiness, smartness, and good scent (what Allah willed him to mention), and then said to him: "O death angel! If the believer does not face, at his death, but such image of you, it would be very sufficient for him."

This includes also to witness the two keeping angels. Wuhaib said: "We were informed that no one dies until his two keeping angels who write down his deeds seem to him: If he is an obedient, they would say to him: "May Allah reward you

on behalf of us. How many a true gathering in which you made us sit, and how many a righteous deed into which you brought us ." If he is a wicked, they would say to him: "May Allah reward you not on behalf of us! How many an evil gathering in which you made us sit, how many an immoral deed into which you brought us, and how many a foul word which you caused us to hear. May Allah reward you not on our behalf."

The third calamity is the disobedient men's vision of their places in the fire of Hell, and fear before witnessing them. At their death agonies, while they become very weak, with their souls submitting to come out and leave their bodies, they would not die until they are given one of two tidings by the death angel: "Receive tidings of the fire, O enemy of Allah", or "Receive the glad tidings of Paradise, O ally of Allah." That is the cause lying behind the fear experienced by those endued with sound minds.

In this respect, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "None of you would come out of this world (by death) until he knows first where his destiny would lead him, and see his place in Paradise or in the fire (of Hell)." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Ali).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever likes to meet Allah, Allah likes to meet him; and whoever dislikes to meet Allah, Allah dislikes to meet him." They said: "But all of us dislike death." On that he "peace be upon him" said: "It is not that which is intended. If a faithful believer is given access to see the place and destiny upon which he would come, he should subsequently like to meet Allah, and Allah would like to meet him." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ubadah Ibn As-Samit "Allah be pleased with him").

It is reported that Hudhaifah Ibn Al-Yaman said to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with them" towards the end of the night: "Get up and check in which hour we are." Ibn Mas'ud got up and went and then returned to him saying: "The red (light of dawn) has appeared." On that Hudhaifah said: "I seek refuge with Allah from a morning that leads to the fire (of Hell)."

It is further reported that Marwan entered upon Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" to visit him (and he was in his fatal illness), and said (by way of supplication): "O Allah! Alleviate that difficulty on him." But Abu Hurairah said: "No, O Allah, aggravate it more on me." Then Abu Hurairah went on weeping and said: "By Allah, I neither weep out of grief for this world, nor because I am going to leave you. But I am expecting one of both tidings from my Lord, either of Paradise or of the fire (of Hell)."

It is narrated in a particular Hadith that the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, if Allah Almighty is pleased with a servant, He would say to the death angel: "O death angel! Go to so and so and bring his soul to me to relieve him. The deeds he has done are sufficient for Me. I indeed have tried him and found him just as I like from him." Then, the angel of death descends in the company of five hundred angels, having with them sticks of basil and roots of saffron, and each of them give him a glad tidings (of Paradise) similar to what the others give him. The angels stand in two rows, in expectation for his soul to

come out, having the basil with them. When Iblis looks at them, he places his hand over his head (out of grief), and his soldiers say to him: "What is the matter with you O our chief?" he says: "Do you not see the honor given to that servant? Where have you been from him?" they say: "We did our best with him, but he was infallible."" (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Tamim Ad-Dari "Allah be pleased with him").

According to Al-Hassan Al-Basri: "The believer's comfort lies in his meeting with Allah; and if one's comfort lies in the meeting with Allah Almighty, the day of his death then would be the day of his pleasure, delight, safety, honor and exaltation."

It was said to Jabir Ibn Zaid at his death: "What do you wish?" He said: "Only a glimpse I catch of Al-Hassan." When Al-Hassan came to visit him, it was said to him: "That is Al-Hassan." He raised his head and looked at him, and then said: "O my brothers! It is only at this hour that I am going to leave you, either to Paradise or to the fire (of Hell)."

Explication Of Such Of States As Favorable For The Would-Be Dead At Death

It should be known to you that the dearest state in which a would-be deceased should be is quietness and tranquility, and from his tongue to utter the testimony of faith, and from his heart to have good assumption of Allah.

As for the state, it is reported that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Watch the dead with three things: when his forehead sweats, his eyes shed tears, and his lips get stiff, then, it is the mercy of Allah that has descended upon him. But if eh snores like the stifled, his color turns red, and his lips shrink, then, it is the punishment of Allah that has afflicted him." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Salman: unauthentic).

That his tongue utters the testimony of faith, is a sign of good. It is reported on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Dictate to the would-be deceased among you (the testimony of faith, i.e.) 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah', (according to the narration of Hudhaifah) for it effaces such of mistakes as committed before it."

It is further reported on the authority of Uthman "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever dies and he knows that there is none worthy of worship except for Allah, would enter Paradise."

Uthman "Allah be pleased with him" said: "When a would-be deceased comes to his last breaths, dictate to him 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah', for there is no servant whose deeds are concluded with it but that it would be his provision to Paradise."

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Be present with the would-be deceased among you (during their last breaths), and remind them (of Allah), for they see what you see not, and dictate to them 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah'."

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him"

that he said: I heard the Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "The death angel attended to take up the soul of a man and looked at his heart and found nothing of faith therein. But when he loosened his jawbones, he found his tongue sticking to his palate while saying 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah', thereupon his sins were forgiven for him because of this word of pure faith." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and At-Tabarani).

On the other hand, the dictator should not be pressing in his dictation. But he should rather be gentle and kind, for the tongue of the patient might not be able to utter, which makes him feel it difficulty on himself, as he regards the testimony heavy on himself, and refrains from saying it, which might be a cause of his evil conclusion. The point here is that man should die with nothing in his heart other than his beloved, i.e. Allah the One and Only. In this way, his death and coming to his beloved become the highest pleasure. But if the heart is engaged in this world with its delights and pleasures, and the word of testimony runs only on the tongue, and the heart does not conform to it, then, he would fall into the risk of the Divine will. To be sure, only the movement of the tongue is pointless, unless Allah is bountiful with acceptance.

As for the good assumption of Allah Almighty, it is favorable at that time. We have mentioned that in the Book of Hope. There are many narrations in favor of the superiority of that good assumption of Allah:

It is reported that Wathilah Ibn Al-Asqa' "Allah be pleased with him" entered upon a patient (during his last breaths) and asked him: "Tell me: What is your assumption of Allah?" He said: "Although my sins have overwhelmed me, and I am on the verge of destruction, I hope for the mercy of my Lord." On that Wathilah glorified Allah and so did the family of the deceased accordingly. He glorified Allah and said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: Allah Almighty says: "I am just as My servant assumes of Me. So, let him assume of Me what he likes." (Ibn Hibban, Al-Baihaqi and Ahmad).

It is further reported that the Prophet "peace be upon him" entered upon a man to visit him during his last breaths, and asked him: "How do you find yourself?" he said: "I hope for (the mercy of) Allah and fear of my sins." On that he "peace be upon him" said: "Never do both gather together in the heart of a servant at the like of that state but that He Almighty gives him what he hopes for, and secures him from what he fears."

It is reported on the authority of Thabit Al-Bunani that he said: There was a young man of bad temper, and his mother used to admonish him more often saying: "O my son! You shall have a day (when you die). So, remember your day." When death approaches him, she turned over him and said: "O my son! I used to warn you of this death time of yours." He said: "O mother! I have a Lord who does favor so much; and I hope He will not deprive me today of some of His favor." Thabit commented: "Then, his Lord bestowed mercy upon him by virtue of his good assumption of his Lord Almighty."

It is further reported on the authority of Jabir Ibn Wada'ah that he said: There was a rebellious youth and when death approached him his mother asked

him: "O my son! Do you have any bequest?" he said: "Yes, do not deprive me of my ring for it has the Name of Allah Almighty, by virtue of which Allah may bestow mercy upon me." When he was buried, he was seen in a dream (by somebody) in which he said: "Tell my mother that the word (the Name of Allah) has benefitted me, and Allah has forgiven for me."

A Bedouin fell fatally sick and it was said to him: "You are on the threshold of death." He said: "Where I would be taken?" it was said: "To Allah Almighty." He said: "Then, why should I dislike to go to Him from Whom nothing but good is seen?"

According to Abu Al-Mu'tamir Ibn Sulaiman: When death approached my father he said to me: "O Mu'tamir! Tell me about concessions, perchance I would meet Allah Almighty while having good assumption of Him." Indeed, it was favorable in their sight to make a mention to anyone his good deeds at his death, in order to strengthen his good assumption of Allah Almighty.

Explication Of Grief At Meeting The Angel Of Death Through Many Tales

According to Ash'ath Ibn Aslam: Abraham "peace be upon him" asked the angel of death, and he has two eyes, one in the front and the other in the back: "O angel of death! What do you do if you are to take up many souls simultaneously, one in the East and another in the West, and the epidemic broke out in a land, and two armies faced each other in another place?" he said: "I call the spirits, by permission of Allah, and they soon become in between those two fingers of mine." He further said: "The whole earth was spread out to him, and became like a wash tube in front of him to take therefrom what he likes." He gave him the glad tidings of being the intimate friend of Allah Almighty.

Solomon, son of David "peace be upon them" said to the angel of death: "What is the matter with you that you do not do justice among the people? You take up the spirit of so and so, and leave so and so." He said: "I have, in this issue, no better knowledge than you. It is but books being thrown to me, containing the names (of those to be taken by death)."

It is reported on the authority of Wahb Ibn Munabbih that one of the kings asked for a dress to set out on journey, and one was brought to him, but it did not appeal him. After many were brought to him, he chose one. The same happened in the horses and riding mounts he asked for. Then, he set out in his procession, in the company of his slaves and horses, and Satan had blown in him the air of arrogance and haughtiness. On the way, he met a man of shabby clothes who greeted him with peace, but the king gave no reply. He then caught hold of the rein of his riding mount, and when the king scolded him to leave it, he said to him: "But I have a need for you." He said: "Then, wait until I dismount." He said: "No, but now. Give me your ear to tell you about it in secret." He gave ear to him and he said: "I am the angel of death." The king said: "Then, give me respite until I return to my family, fulfill my need, and give my bequest." He said: "No, but let it be now." He took up his soul, and the king fell down as if he were a piece of wood.

On the way the angel of death met a faithful believer whom he greeted with

peace, and the man returned the greeting. He told him that he had a need for him, and when the man gave ear to him, he told him that he was the angel of death. He said: "Welcome to the one whose absence from me has been very long. There is no absent on the surface on the earth dearer to me than you." The angel of death said to him: "Then, fulfill your need for which you have come out." The man said: "I have no need dearer to me than to meet Allah Almighty." He said to him: "Then, choose in whichever state you like me to take up your soul." He said: "Do you have power to do so?" he answered in the affirmative and said: "I have been commanded to do so." He said: "Then, give me respite until I offer ablution and pray and then take up my soul while I am falling in prostration." He took up his soul while he was in prostration.

According to Abu Bakr Ibn Abdullah Al-Muzni: "A man from the children of Israel gathered much wealth and when he became on the threshold of death, he told his sons to bring him the different kinds of his property, and much horses, camels, slaves, etc, were brought to him, and when he caught a glimpse of that, he went on weeping in sigh for leaving it. When the angel of death saw him weeping he said to him: "What causes you to weep? By Him Who gave you all of this, I would not leave you until I separate your soul from your body by death." He said to him: "Then, give me respite until I distribute my property." He said: "No respite is available now. Why have you not done so before the coming of your appointed term?" then, he took up his soul.

According to Ata' Ibn Yasar: "When it is the night of the middle of Sha'ban, a book is given to the angel of death and it is said to him: "This year, take up the souls of the names that are in this book." Then, a servant cultivates his land, marries women and builds houses and palaces and does not know that his name is in that book.

According to Al-Hassan: "There is no day but that on which the angel of death checks each house three times: whomever of them he finds has fulfilled his sustenance and consumed his time, he would take up his soul. Once he takes up his soul, his family cry and weep for him, thereupon the angel of death catches hold of the gateposts and says: "By Allah, I have neither devoured anything of his sustenance, nor have I consumed his lifetime, nor have I decreased of his appointed term. I shall return to you again and again until no one of you remains alive." Al-Hassan commented: "By Allah, were they to see his standing and hear his words, they would be astonished from their deceased, and rather weep for themselves."

It is narrated on the authority of Al-A'mash from Khaithamah that he said: Once, the angel of death visited Solomon, son of David "peace be upon them" and had a long gaze at a man from among his sitters. When he came out the man asked him: "Who is that man?" he said: "The angel of death." He said: "I have seen him gazing at me as if he has wanted me." Solomon asked him: "Then, what do you want?" he said: "I like you to deliver me from him, and command the wind to carry me and convey me to the farthest end of India." He did accordingly, and the wind carried him. Then, the angel of death visited Solomon once again and he said to him: "I have seen you gazing for a long time at one

from among my sitters." He said: "Yes, I wondered at him for I was commanded to take up his soul in the farthest end of India at a very near hour, and he was with you. So I wondered (how should he go to India in order for me to take up his soul there)."

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCERNING THE DEATH OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH "ALLAH'S BLESSING AND PEACE BE UPON HIM" AND THE RIGHTLY-GUIDED CALIPHS AFTER HIM

The Death Of The Messenger Of Allah "Allah's Blessing And Peace Be Upon Him"

It should be known to you that you have a good pattern in the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" as living and dead, in all of his deeds, acts and words. All his states are but a source of instruction and giving lessons to such as likes to take consideration. No one was more honored in the Sight of Allah than him. He was His intimate friend, beloved, chosen, private converser, Prophet and Messenger. But even, did He Almighty give him a respite beyond his appointed term? Did He delay the time of his death even for a single moment when it was due upon him? No! He sent to him the honorable angels entrusted to take up souls, who, in turn, took up his pure soul and carried it to a mercy and good satisfaction and good things, and a good sitting place of truth in the presence of Allah the Most Gracious.

Moreover, he received the severe agonies of death, and his moaning was audible, his anxiety was apparent, his suffering was visible, his colour changed, his forehead sweated, and so on to the extent that those who attended his death time wept for his severe trouble. Has then the office of Prophethood averted the decree from him? Has it lightened from him the suffering and torture of death he was doomed to receive? Of course not, although he is, in the Sight of Allah, the lord of the station of praise, and the fountain lake which the people would come upon to drink, the first upon whom the earth would split open, and the lord of intercession on the day of presentation.

Why then should we not imitate the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in all of his deeds and acts? Why should we not be among the pious, given that all of us would inevitably come upon the fire of Hell? That is confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: "Not one of you but will pass over it: This is, with your Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished. But We shall save those who guarded against evil, and We shall leave the wrong-doers therein, (humbled) to their knees." (Maryam 71-72)

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾ ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا وَّنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

So, let every servant consider as to whether he is nearer to the wrongdoers or to the pious. Consider yourself after you consider first the conduct of the righteous predecessors, who were, in spite of their high position, from among the

fearful. Then, consider the conduct of the chief of the Messengers "peace be upon him" who was certain of the matter, and consider how he was distressed when it was his time to leave this world, and how he was when he turned to the Garden of shelter.

In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We entered upon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in the dwelling place of our mother A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" and it was a short time before his death. He cast a glance of us and his eyes shed tears "peace be upon him". Then he said: "Welcome to you! May Allah greet you, give you shelter, support and help you. I advise you to fear Allah Almighty, and I entrust you to Allah Almighty: I am, to you, from Him an evident warner. Do not be arrogant over Allah Almighty on His earth and in His servants. Now, it is time of death, turning to Allah Almighty, to the Farthest Lote-Tree, to the Garden of shelter, and to the fully satisfying cup . Greet yourselves and those who enter your religion after me with peace on behalf on me." (Al-Bazzar).

It is further reported that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to Gabriel "peace be upon him" at the time of his death: "Who would take care of my people after me?" Allah Almighty revealed to Gabriel that 'Give my beloved the glad tidings that I would never disappoint him concerning his people; and give him the happy news that he would be the first of people to come out of the earth when they would be resurrected, and their chief and master when they would be gathered together; and that Paradise would be forbidden to all nations until his people would enter first." On that he said: "Now, I have got comforted." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Jabir and Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them").

It is reported on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" commanded us to wash his body with seven water-skins drawn out from seven springs. We did accordingly and he felt some comfort. He came out and led the prayer, prayed forgiveness for, and invoked good upon the martyrs of Uhud, and advised people to be kind and good to the Ansar. He said: "Coming to the point: O assembly of Muhajirs! You would increase in number, and the Ansar would remain with no increase. The Ansar are my shelter to which I have taken refuge. So, deal generously with the doer of good among them, and forgive the doer of evil among them." Then he said: "A servant has been given the freedom to choose this world, or what is with Allah Almighty, and he chose what is with Allah Almighty." On that Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" went on weeping, thinking that he "peace be upon him" intended himself (by death). The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Be quiet O Abu Bakr! Close all doors of the mosque except for the door that is opposite to the house of Abu Bakr, for I do not know there is anyone better to me in company than Abu Bakr." (Ad-Darimi in his Musnad).

It is reported on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: "The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died in my house,

on the day of my turn, while he was leaning on my chest closer to my neck, and Allah made my saliva mix with his Saliva at his death. Abd-Ar-Rahman entered upon me with a Siwak in his hand and I was supporting (the back of) The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" (against my chest). I saw The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" looking at that (Siwak) and I knew that he loved the Siwak, so I said (to him): "Shall I take it for you ? " He nodded in agreement. So I took it and it was too stiff for him to use, so I said: "Shall I soften it for you ?" He nodded his approval. So I softened it and he cleaned his teeth with it. In front of him there was a jug or a tin containing water. He started dipping his hand in the water and rubbing his face with it, he said: "None has the right to be worshipped except Allah. Death has its agonies." He then lifted his hands (towards the sky) and started saying: "With the highest companion," till he expired and his hand dropped down. Thus, I came to know that he "peace be upon him" would not choose us." (Al-Bukhari).

It is narrated on the authority of Sa'id Ibn Abdullah from his father that he said: When the Ansar saw that the ailment of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" became increasingly aggravated, they went round the mosque, and Al-Abbas "Allah be pleased with him" was the first to enter upon him, and he informed him about their position and fear (of death for him). Then, Al-Fadl entered upon him and informed him about the same, and so did Ali "Allah be pleased with him". He "peace be upon him" stretched his hand towards them to take it and they did accordingly. He said: "What do you say?" They said: "We fear you would die." Their women cried for their men's gathering near the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". On that the Prophet "peace be upon him" was excited and came out reclining against both Ali and Al-Fadl, and Al-Abbas was walking ahead of him. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was bandaging his head, and dragging his feet on the ground, until he sat on the stepladder just below the pulpit. The people turned their faces to him and he then praised Allah and lauded Him, and said: "O people! I was reported that you fear death for me as if you disapprove death. What do you reject of the death of your Prophet? Have the news of my death not been announced by me to you? Have the news of your death not been announced to you? Has any Prophet to be sent before me survived forever so that I would survive forever like him? Behold! I am going to join (the presence of) my Lord, and you are going to joined His presence too. I enjoin upon you to be good to the early Muhajirs, for Allah Almighty says: "By (the Token of) Time (through the Ages), Verily Man is in loss, Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy." (Al-Asr 1-3)

﴿ وَٱلۡعَصۡرِ ۝ إِنَّ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ لَفِى خُسۡرٍ ۝ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلصَّبۡرِ ۝ ﴾

He "peace be upon him" also enjoined upon the Muhajirs to be kind and good to the Ansar who preceded them in faith and residence, and divided their things equally with them. He also enjoined upon the people to follow the Quraish in the matter of ruling. Then, he said: "O people! No doubt sins change favors: If

the people are righteous, their rulers would be righteous with them, and if they are wicked, their rulers would be wicked with them. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: "Thus do We make the wrongdoers turn to each other, because of what they earn." (Al-An'am 129)

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّي بَعْضَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to Abu Bakr: "Ask what you like to ask O Abu Bakr." He said: "Is the appointed term about to come?" He "peace be upon him" said: "Yes, the appointed term is about to come." He said: "Blessed be you, O Prophet of Allah, in what is with Allah Almighty! What about our turning?" He said: "To Allah and to the Farthest Lote-Tree, and then to the Garden of shelter, the highest Paradise, the fully satisfying cup, the highest companion, the best fortune and blissful living." He asked: "O Prophet of Allah! Who should undertake washing your dead body?" He said: "Men from among my household, beginning from the closest to me in kinship and then the next of kin." He asked: "O Prophet of Allah! In which thing should we shroud you?" He said: "In this garment of mine, along with a Yemenite suite and white Egyptian-made cotton dress." He asked: "O Prophet of Allah! How should we offer prayer on you?" then he went on weeping and so we did. He "peace be upon him" said: "Keep quiet, may Allah forgive for you and reward you on behalf of your Prophet. Once you washed and shrouded my dead body, place me on this bed of mine, on the verge of my grave, and leave me for an hour. The first to invoke prayer on me is Allah Almighty: it is He Who invokes prayer on you, and so do His angels. Then, He gives permission to the angels to offer prayer on me, and the first of them to enter and offer prayer upon me is Gabriel, then Michael, then Israfil, and then the angel of death in the company of a lot of angels, followed by all the angels "peace be upon them". Then, enter O you and offer prayer upon me in groups. Let my household be the first to offer prayer on me, beginning from the closest to me and then the next of kin. Then the groups of women and then the groups of children." He further asked him: "Then, who should get you into the grave?" he said: "Men from among my household, beginning from the closest to me and then the next of kin, along with a lot of angels whom you do not see, although they see you well. Get up and convey the message, on my behalf, to those to come after me." (Ibn Sa'd in his Tabaqat on the authority of Al-Waqidi from Ibn Mas'ud).

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Zam'ah that he said: Bilal came in the beginning of the month of Rabie the First and pronounced Adhan for prayer, thereupon the Prophet "peace be upon him" (being fatally ill) said: "Order Abu Bakr to lead the prayer." I came out and found none at the gate of the mosque other than Umar "Allah be pleased with him" with some men but Abu Bakr was not among them. I said to him: "Get up O Umar and lead the prayer." He did accordingly, and as he was a loud-voiced man, his voice reached the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" who said angrily: "Where is Abu Bakr? Allah rejects, and so do the Muslims (that Abu Bakr is not the imam)." He said it thrice, adding: "Order Abu Bakr to lead the

prayer." A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" said: "O Messenger of Allah! Abu Bakr is a softhearted man, and once he stands in your place, he could not help weeping." On that he said: "You (women) are but like the female companions of Joseph. Order Abu Bakr to lead the prayer." Then, Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" led the prayer beginning from that which followed the prayer which Umar led. Afterwards, Umar used to say to Abdullah Ibn Zam'ah: "Woe to you! What have you done with me? By Allah, had I not thought that it was the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" who ordered you to do so, I would not have done it." Abdullah replied to him: "But I did not see anyone (at that time) worthier of that than you." (Abu Dawud and both Sahihs).

It is narrated on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: When it was the day on which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died, the people felt he recovered a bit in the beginning of the day, thereupon the men dispersed to their houses and needs cheerfully, and left him with the women. Such being the case, as we became more hopeful and joyful than we had ever been before, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" ordered us to come out and leave him for the angel (of death) asked his permission to be admitted. All who were present in the house came out except for me, and his head was in my lap. He sat and I moved away to one side of the house. He had a private long conversation with the angel after which he invited me and placed his head in my lap once again. He ordered the other women to enter. I said to him: "That is not the voice of Gabriel." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Yes, O A'ishah. That is the angel of death. He came to me and said: "Indeed, Allah sent me and ordered me not to enter upon you except by your permission: if you give me permission, that is good, and if you do not give me permission, I would return. He also ordered me not to take up your soul until you order me." I said to him: "Then, leave me until Gabriel comes to me, for it is time for Gabriel to come."'"

A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" resumed: We received a matter for which we had no response. We became gloomy as if a calamity afflicted us. Then, Gabriel "peace be upon him" came in his due time and greeted with peace, and I knew his voice. The women left the house. He entered and said to him: "Allah Almighty greets you with peace and asks you about your suffering, although He knows well to what extent you are suffering. But indeed, He liked to advance you in honor and raise you in dignity, and make you an example and a pattern for your people." He said: "I am severely ached." He said: "Receive then the glad tidings for Allah Almighty wanted to let you attain what He has prepared for you." He related to him the news of the angel of death, thereupon Gabriel said to him: "O Muhammad! Your Lord has a great longing for you. Has he not informed you about what he intended for you? By Allah, the angel of death has never sought the permission of anyone, nor would he do so once again. The point is that your Lord is to perfect your honor, and He has a great longing for you." He said to him: "Then, do not leave until he comes."

Women were admitted, and he said to Fatimah "Allah be pleased with her": "Bring your head close to me." She turned over him and he talked to her secretly, thereupon she raised her head with her eyes shedding tears and unable to speak. Then, he asked her to bring her head close to him once again, and she turned over him, and he talked to her privately, thereupon she raised her head cheerfully, but unable to speak. What we saw from her was really amazing to us. Afterwards I asked her about it and she said: "At first, he told me that he was going to die on that day, thereupon I wept. Then he said to me: "I invoked Allah to join you with me among the first group of my household, and make you in my company." On that I smiled." She then brought her two sons close to him and he smelled them.

A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" resumed: The angel of death came and sought permission, and he was admitted. He said: "What do you command us O Muhammad?" he said: "Join me with my Lord now." He said: "Nay! Your Lord has a great longing for you. He has never hesitated to cause anyone to die as He has done with you, neither has He forbidden me to enter upon anyone but with his permission except for you. But anyway, your hour is ahead of you." Then, Gabriel came and said: "Peace be upon you O Messenger of Allah. That is the last time for me to descend on earth. The Divine revelation was concluded, and the world was folded up, and on the earth, I had no need other than you, nor has anything concerned me but to attend to you."

She added: Then, I stood to the Prophet "peace be upon him" to place his head in between my breasts, and took hold of his chest, and then he became unconscious until he fell down, and his forehead sweated so much as I have never seen anyone like him. I wiped that sweat off him and I have never seen more pleasant-smelling than it. I said to him whenever he recovered: "Let my father and mother, and all of my family and myself be sacrificed for you! What is that sweat coming out of your forehead?" he "peace be upon him" said: "O A'ishah! The soul of the believer comes out (when he dies) with sweat, while that of the disbeliever comes out from between both corners of his mouth like that of a donkey."

At that moment, we were scared and sent for our families. The first man to come to us was my brother, who did not attend his death, and he was sent to invite my father. But the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died before anyone came. It is Allah who withheld them from him for he was in the company of Gabriel and Michael "peace be upon them". Whenever he recovered from unconsciousness, he would say: "No, let it be with the highest companion" as if he were given the freedom of choice. But whenever he had the power to speak, he would say: "Adhere to prayer! Adhere to prayer! You would continue to be constantly firm so long as you offer prayer." He died while saying: "prayer! Prayer!" (At-Tabarani on the authority of Jabir and Ibn Abbas, with a slight variation of wording).

It is further reported on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died just in the glorious forenoon of Monday. (Ibn Abd-Al-Barr).

It is narrated on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she

said: When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died, the people fell in clutter, and the angels covered his dead body with his garment. But the people disputed over his death: Some belied the news, others kept silent, others were given to confusion, others kept their minds, and others kept motionless. Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" was among those who belied the news of his death. Ali "Allah be pleased with him" was among those who kept silent, and Uthman "Allah be pleased with him" was among those who kept motionless.

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" came out to the people and said: "Indeed, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did not die, and Allah would return him once again in order to cut off the hands and feet of men from among the hypocrites who hoped for his death. The point is that Allah Almighty had an appointment with him like that of Moses "peace be upon him", and he is going to come to you."

According to another version, Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "O people! Hold back your tongues from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" for he did not die. By Allah, I do not like to hear anyone talking that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died, otherwise, I would strike him with this sword of mine." As for Ali "Allah be pleased with him" he kept silent and did not leave the house. As for Uthman "Allah be pleased with him" he became motionless, unable to move. But none among the Muslims were in a better state than both Abu Bakr and Al-Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" whom Allah Almighty supported with help and success. The people did not become quiet except by the statement of Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him". Al-Abbas "Allah be pleased with him" came and said: "By Allah, other than Whom there is no god, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" tasted death. He recited to you while he was living among you: "Truly you will die (one day), and truly they (too) will die (one day). In the End will you (all), on the Day of Judgment, settle your disputes in the presence of your Lord." (Az-Zumar 30-31)

﴿ إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ۝ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ ۝ ﴾

It is further reported on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: The news of his death reached Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" while he was in the dwelling places of Banu Al-Harith Ibn Al-Khazraj, thereupon he came and entered upon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", looked at his dead body, turned over him and kissed him and said: "Let my father and mother sacrifice their lives for you O Messenger of Allah! Allah was not to make you taste death twice. By Allah, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died." Then, he came out to the people and addressed them saying: "O people! Whoever worships Muhammad "peace be upon him" then, let him know that Muhammad "peace be upon him" died; and whoever worships the lord of Muhammad, then, it should be known to him that He Almighty is Ever-Living and never dies." Then, he recited the following statement of Allah: "Muhammad is no more than a Messenger: many were the Messengers that passed away before him. If he died

or were slain, will you then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah; but Allah (on the other hand) will swiftly reward those who (serve him) with gratitude." (Al Imran 144) (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

﴿ وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ۚ أَفَإِن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَنقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا ۗ وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that when Abu Bakr entered the house, and then invoked prayer upon the Prophet and praised him, the household made a high noise, so loud that the people in the praying place heard it, and the more he remembered anything, the more they raised their noise. Their noise stopped only when a man greeted them with peace at the gate of the house and addressed them saying: "Peace be upon you, O household! (He recited) "Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of Life): for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception." (Al Imran 185)

﴿ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾ ﴾

In Allah Almighty, there is a successor of everyone, an attainment of every desire, and a salvation from every terror. It is Allah whom you should hope, and on him you should rely." They paid attention to him and stopped weeping. But when they stopped weeping, his voice was lost, and one of them looked to know who he was, but he saw none. Then, they returned to weeping once again, thereupon another caller whose voice they did not recognize called them saying: "O household! Remember Allah Almighty, and praise Him on whichever state you are in, perchance you would be among the sincere chosen devotees of Allah. Indeed, in Allah there is condolence for every calamity, and recompense for every loss. So, it is Allah Whom you should obey, and upon His command you should act." Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Those are but Al-Khadir and Elisha "peace be upon them": they have attended the funeral of the Prophet "peace be upon him"." (Al-Hakim and Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Anas).

According to Al-Qa'qa', when the Prophet "peace be upon him" died, Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" stood and addressed the people saying, after he had invoked prayer and peace upon the Prophet and praised Allah Almighty on whichever state they were in: "I testify that there is no god to be worshipped but Allah Alone, Who was true to His promise, supported His servant, and Alone defeated the confederates (of disbelievers). All perfect praise be to Allah Alone. I testify that Muhammad "peace be upon him" is His servant, Messenger and the last of all the Prophets and Messengers. I also testify that the Book is just as He revealed, the religion as He prescribed, the speech and saying as true as he talked and said, and that Allah Almighty is indeed the Evident Truth.

O Allah! Send upon Muhammad, Your servant, Messenger, Prophet, beloved, trustworthy, and chosen, the best blessing and peace as You have ever sent upon anyone of Your creatures. O Allah! Confer Your prayer, wellbeing and mercy upon the chief of Messengers and the last of the Prophets, and the imam of the pious, Muhammad, the leader of good and the Messenger of mercy. O Allah! Make him closer to Your presence, strengthen his proof, honor his station, and raise him to a position of praise, the like of which all the foremost and the last aspire for, and benefit us with his position of praise on the Day of Judgement, and make him attain the access (to intercession) and the high degree in Paradise. O Allah! Confer prayer and blessing upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad, just as You conferred prayer and blessing upon Abraham: You are praiseworthy, glorious.

O people! Whoever worships Muhammad "peace be upon him" then, let him know that Muhammad "peace be upon him" died; and whoever worships the lord of Muhammad, then, it should be known to him that He Almighty is Ever-Living and never dies. However, Allah has announced to you in advance the news of his death. So, do not be scared, for Allah Almighty has preferred for His Prophet "peace be upon him" what is with Him to what is with you. He then took him unto His reward and left among you His Book and the sunnah of His Prophet "peace be upon him". Whoever acts upon them has indeed approved the truth, and whoever separated between them has indeed rejected the truth. O you who believe! Stand with justice, and let not Satan divert you by the death of your Prophet "peace be upon him" nor tempt you from your religion. But rather overpower Satan with good perchance you would debilitate him entirely, and do not give him respite lest he would catch you and tempt you from the truth."

It is further reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: When Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" finished from his sermon, he said to Umar: "O Umar! Is it you of whom I was reported that he said that the Prophet of Allah "peace be upon him" did not die? Do you not see that the Prophet of Allah "peace be upon him" said such and such words on such and such a day? Indeed, Allah Almighty said in His Holy Book: "Truly you will die (one day), and truly they (too) will die (one day). In the End will you (all), on the Day of Judgment, settle your disputes in the presence of your Lord." (Az-Zumar 30-31)

﴿ إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

On that Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "By Allah, it seems as if I have never heard that Holy Verse in the Book before now due to the severe calamity that as afflicted us. I testify that the Book is as true as it was revealed, the speech as he said it, and that Allah Almighty is Ever-Living and never dies. We all are to Allah, and to Him we shall return. Allah's blessing and peace be upon His Messenger and Prophet. We expect the reward for (our patience on losing) His Messenger "peace be upon him" with Allah Almighty." Then, he sat beside Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with them".

It is reported on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"

died, they were confused about how they should wash his dead body, and whether or not they should deprive him of his clothes. However, Allah Almighty caused them to be overtaken by slumber, and then one of them called, and none knew who he was: "Wash the dead body of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" with his clothes on." They awoke and did accordingly. In this way, the dead body of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was washed in his shirt, until when they finished from washing him, he was shrouded.

It is reported on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We liked to take off his shirt thereupon we were called "Do not take off the shirt of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"." We did accordingly. We then washed his dead body while being in his shirt in the same way as we wash the dead among us. We were called to be gentle to the dead body of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in washing, for we would be sufficed that.

That was the death of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". His belongings were buried with him. According to Abu Ja'far: "His wrapper and amaranth were spread out in his grave, over which the clothes he used to put on were then spread, and then his dead body in the shroud was placed over that. After his death, he left no property, nor has he ever built a brick over a brick or a pipe over a pipe during his lifetime. His death is a lesson for the Muslims to learn, and a good pattern to follow.

The Death Of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah Be Pleased With Him"

When death approached Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" came to him and said the following poetic verse: "By your life, in no way could wealth avail a young man when it is time for his soul to be disturbed and the breast constricted with it." hearing that, he uncovered his face and said to her: "No, but you'd rather say: "And the stupor of death will bring Truth (before his eyes): "This was the thing which you was trying to escape!" (Qaf 19)

﴿ وَجَآءَتْ سَكْرَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ بِٱلْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ ﴾

Consider those garments of mine and wash them to shroud me in them, for the living is more needy to the new than the dead."

During his last breaths, they visited him and said: "Should we invite a physician to see you?" he said: "My physician (i.e. Allah Almighty) has seen me and said: 'I do what I like to do.'"

Salman Al-Farisi "Allah be pleased with him" came to visit him to inquire about his health and said to him: "O Abu Bakr! Give us your advice." He said: "Allah is going to open the world to you. So, take from it only what conveys you (to the end of your journey to the hereafter), and put in your mind that whoever offers Morning prayer becomes under the protection of Allah Almighty. So, do not betray Allah Almighty in His protection, lest He would throw you into the fire prone on your face."

When the ailment of Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" became more

aggravated, and the people liked him to choose a successor for him, he chose Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him". The people said to him: "You have chosen your successor over us one who is severe and harsh-hearted. Then, what would you say to your Lord when He asks you about that?" he said: "I would say: 'I have chosen as my successor over your people the best of your people.'"

Then, he sent somebody to invite Umar "Allah be pleased with him" and he came, to whom Abu Bakr said: "I am going to give you an advice. It should be known to you that Allah Almighty has a right to be fulfilled during the day, which He never accepts if it is postponed to the night; and He has a right to be fulfilled at night, which He never accepts if it is delayed to the coming morning; and that He never accepts the supererogatory deed until the obligatory deed is offered. The balance (of good deeds) of anyone becomes heavy on the Day of Judgement due to his following the truth in this world, no matter how heavy on him it might be, and it is incumbent upon a balance (of good deeds) in which nothing but truth is placed to become heavy. Contrastingly, the balance (of good deeds) of another becomes light on the Day of Judgement due to his following falsehood in this world, which seems light on him; and it is incumbent upon a balance (of good deeds) in which nothing but falsehood is placed to become light.

It is true that Allah Almighty remembered the inhabitants of Paradise with the best of their deeds, and forgave for them their misdeeds. Nevertheless, (the people are divided into two): One says: "I am less in rank than those, and in no way could I attain the degree of their righteous deeds." The other says: "I am better than those in rank." No doubt, Allah mentioned the sign of mercy and that of punishment, in order for the faithful believer to be desirous (for the mercy) and fearful (of the punishment), and do not contribute in his destruction, nor wish from Allah but the truth. If you keep in mind this advice of mine, no absent would become dearer to you than death, which should inevitably afflict you; and if you waste it, then, no absent would become more hateful to you than death, which should inevitably strike you, and in no way could you escape it."

Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab said: When death approached Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" the companions came to visit him and said to him: "O successor of the Messenger of Allah! Provide us (from your knowledge), for we see you are going to leave us." Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Whoever says the following words and then dies, Allah Almighty raises his soul up to the evident horizon." They asked: "What is the evident horizon?" he said: "A hall in front of the Throne (of Majesty), in which there are the gardens of Allah, along with rivers and trees, and everyday one hundred parts of mercy frequent it. I mean: 'You created the people without any need for them, and divided them into two parties: one for bliss and another for the blazing fire. So, please, make me among the inhabitants of the bliss, and not among the denizens of the blazing fire. O Allah! You created the creation and made them divisions and parties, and before You created them, You singled out, from among them, some for happiness and others for wretchedness. O Allah! Make not me

wretched because of my disobedience. O Allah! You learnt what every soul would earn (of deeds) before You created it, and there is no flee for it from Your knowledge. So, please, make me among those whom You subjugated to Your obedience. O Allah! None could will until Your will should come first. So, please, make Your will that I should will only what brings me close to You. O Allah! You decreed the movements of Your servants and none could move but by Your permission. So, please, make my movement be only in service of my fear of You. O Allah! You created both good and evil, and doomed to each one what to do therefrom. So, please, make me in the better section. O Allah! You created both Paradise and fire and specified for each its inhabitants. So, please, make me from among the dwellers of Your Paradise. O Allah! You intended error for a people, and constricted their breasts with it. So, please, expand my breast to faith and make it alluring in my heart. O Allah! You manipulated all things and made their destiny to You. So, please, send me, after death, to a good life, and bring me close to You. O Allah! You are my assurance and hope, and there is neither might nor power but with Allah." Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" commented: "All of this is in the Book of Allah Almighty."

The Death Of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah Be Pleased With Him"

It is narrated on the authority of Amr Ibn Maimun "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I saw Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" a few days before he was stabbed in Medina. He was standing with Hudhaifah Ibn Al-Yaman and Uthman Ibn Hunaif to whom he said: "What have you done? Do you think that you have imposed more taxation on the land (of Iraq) than it can bear?" They replied: "We have imposed on it what it can bear because of its great yield." Umar again said: "Check whether you have imposed on the land what it can not bear." They said: "No, (we haven't done)."

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" added: "If Allah keeps me alive I will let the widows of Iraq need no men to support them after me." But only four days had elapsed when he was stabbed (to death). On the day he was stabbed, I was standing and there was nobody between me and him (Umar) except Abdullah Ibn Abbas. Whenever Umar passed between the two rows, he would say: "Stand in straight lines." Whenever he saw no defect (in the rows), he would go forward and start the prayer with Takbir. He would recite The Surah of Yusuf or The Surah of An-Nahl or so in the first rak'ah so that the people may have the time to Join the prayer. As soon as he had said Takbir, I heard him saying: "The dog has killed or eaten me" at the time he (the murderer) stabbed him. A non-Arab infidel proceeded on carrying a double-edged knife and stabbing all the persons he passed by on the right and left (till) he stabbed thirteen persons out of whom nine or seven died. When one of the Muslims saw that, he threw a cloak on him. Realizing that he had been captured, the non-Arab infidel killed himself. Umar held the hand of Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf to lead the prayer.

Those who were standing by the side of Umar saw what I saw, but the people who were in the other parts of the Mosque did not see anything, except that they lost the voice of Umar. They were saying: " Glorified be Allah! Glorified be Allah!" Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Awf led the people in a short prayer. When they

finished the prayer, Umar said: "O Ibn Abbas! Find out who attacked me." Ibn Abbas kept on looking here and there for a short time and came to say: "The slave of Al-Mughirah." On that Umar said: "The craftsman?" Ibn Abbas said: "Yes." Umar said: "May Allah curse him. I did not treat him unjustly. All the Praises be to Allah Who has not caused me to die at the hand of a man who claims himself to be a Muslim. No doubt, you and your father (Abbas) loved to have more non-Arab infidels in Medina." Al-Abbas had the greatest number of slaves. Ibn Abbas said to Umar: "If you wish, we will do." He meant: "If you wish we will kill them." Umar said: "You are mistaken (for you can't kill them) after they have spoken your language, prayed towards your Qiblah, and performed Hajj like yours."

Then Umar "Allah be pleased with him" was carried to his house, and we went along with him. The people were as if they had never suffered a calamity before. Some said: "Do not worry (he will be Alright soon)." Some said: "We are afraid (that he will die)." Then an infusion of dates was brought to him, which he drank but it came out (of the wound) of his belly. Then milk was brought to him, which he drank, and it also came out of his belly. The people realized that he would die. We went to him, and the people came, praising him. A young man came saying: "O Commander of The Believers! Receive the glad tidings from Allah in view of your company with The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and your superiority in Islam, which you know. Then you became the ruler (Caliph) and you ruled with justice; and finally you have been martyred." Umar said: "I wish that all these privileges will counterbalance (my shortcomings) so that I will neither lose nor gain anything."

When the young man turned back to leave, his clothes seemed to be touching the ground. Umar said: "Call the young man back to me." (When he came back) Umar said: "O son of my brother! Lift your clothes, for this will keep your clothes clean and save you from the Punishment of your Lord." Umar further said: "O Abdullah Ibn Umar! See how much I owe others." When the debt was checked, it amounted to approximately eighty-six thousand. Umar said: "If the property of Umar's family covers the debt, then pay the debt thereof; otherwise request it from Banu Adi Ibn Ka'b. But if that too is not sufficient, ask for it from Quraish tribe, and not from anyone else, and pay this debt on my behalf."

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" then said (to Abdullah): "Go to A'ishah and say: "Umar is greeting you. But don't say "The Commander of The Believers" because today I am not the Commander of The Believers. Say: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab asks the permission to be buried with his two companions (The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and Abu Bakr)." Abdullah greeted A'ishah and asked for the permission to enter; and then he entered where he found her sitting as weeping. He said to her: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab is greeting you, and asking The permission to be buried with his two companions." She said: "I had the idea of having this place for me, but today I prefer Umar to me." When he returned it was said (to Umar): "Abdullah Ibn Umar has come." Umar said: "Make me sit up." Somebody supported him against his body and Umar

asked (Abdullah): "What news do you have?" He said: "O Commander of The Believers! It is as you wish. She has given the permission." Umar said: "Praise be to Allah, there was nothing more important to me than this. So when I die, take me, greet A'ishah and say: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab asks the permission (to be buried with his two companions, The Prophet and Abu Bakr); and if she gives the permission, bury me there, and if she refuses, then take me to the graveyard of Muslims."

Then Hafsah came with many other women walking with her. When we saw her, we went away. She went in (to Omar) and wept there for sometime. When the men asked for permission to enter, she went into another place, and we heard her weeping inside. The people said (to Umar): "O Commander of The Believers! Appoint a successor." Umar said: "I do not find anyone more suitable for the job than the following persons or group with whom The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" had been pleased before he died." Then Umar mentioned Ali, Uthman, Az-Zubair, Talhah, Sa'd and Abd-Ar-Rahman. He said: "Abdullah Ibn Umar will be a witness to you, but he will have no share in the rule. His being a witness will compensate him for not sharing the right of ruling. If Sa'd becomes the ruler, it will be alright: otherwise, whoever becomes the ruler should seek his help, as I have not dismissed him because of disability or dishonesty."

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" added: "I recommend that my successor has to take care of the early emigrants, to know their rights and protect their honour and sacred things. I also recommend that he should be kind to the Ansar who had lived in Medina before the emigrants and Belief had entered their hearts before them. I recommend that the (ruler) should accept the good of the righteous among them and excuse their wrongdoers, and I recommend that he should do good to all the people of the towns (or regions), since they are the protectors of Islam and the source of wealth as well as the source of annoyance to the enemy. I also recommend that nothing should be taken from them except from their surplus with their consent. I also recommend that he (the successor) should do good to the Arab Bedouins, as they are the origin of the Arabs and the material of Islam. He should take from what is inferior amongst their properties and distribute that amongst the poor from them. I also recommend him concerning those under protection of Allah and His Apostle: i.e. to fulfill their contracts, to fight for them, and not to overburden them with what is beyond their ability." So when Umar "Allah be pleased with him" expired, we carried him out and set out walking. Abdullah Ibn Umar greeted (A'ishah) and said: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab asks for the permission." A'ishah said: "Bring him in." He was brought in and buried beside his two companions. (Al-Bukhari).

It is further narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: When (the dead body of) Umar was put on his deathbed, the people gathered around him to invoke (Allah) and pray for him before the body was taken away, and I was amongst them. Suddenly I felt somebody taking hold of my shoulder. I found out that he was Ali Ibn Abu Talib. Ali invoked Allah's

Mercy for Umar and said: "O Umar! You have not left behind you a person whose deeds he likes to imitate and meet Allah therewith more than your deeds. By Allah! I always thought that Allah would keep you with your two companions, for very often I used to hear The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "I, Abu Bakr and Umar went (somewhere); I, Abu Bakr and Umar entered (somewhere); and I, Abu Bakr and Umar set out."" (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The Death Of Uthman Ibn Affan "Allah Be Pleased With Him"

Abdullah Ibn Salam "Allah be pleased with him" said: I visited my brother Uthman when he was besieged to pay him salutation. He said to me: "Welcome to my brother. Welcome to my brother. Would I tell you what I saw today in my dream?" I answered: "yes, if you so like." He said: "The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came to me from this wicket in the home and said: "did they besiege you?" I answered: "Yes." He asked: "Did they cause you to be thirsty?" I answered: "Yes." He hang to me a bucket full of water from which I drank until I quenched my thirst to the extent that I still detect its coldness in between my breasts and shoulders. Then he asked: "would you like to emerge victorious over them or to break your fast with us?" I said: "I would like to break my fast with you."" However, Uthman "Allah be pleased with him" was killed on that very day.

Abdullah Ibn Salam "Allah be pleased with him" asked those who were present when Uthman was agitated in his blood after he had been wounded: "What has Uthman said when he was agitated in his blood?" They said: We heard him saying: "O Allah! Gather the Ummah of Muhammad "peace be upon him"." He said: "By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, had he invoked Allah not to gather, they would have never gathered until the Day of Judgement."

It is narrated on the authority of Thumamah Ibn Hazn Al-Qushairi that he said: I was present when Uthman looked at the people from the window of his house and said: "I beseech you by Allah and Islam: do you know that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came to Medina and there was no sweet water (fitting for drink) barring that of the well of Rumah, thereupon he said: 'He, who purchases the well of Rumah, and makes his (portion of it no more than a) bucket in it with the buckets of the Muslims, will have what is better than it in the Garden'? I then purchased it from my own wealth, and made my (portion in it no more than a) bucket in it with the buckets of the Muslims; and now, you prevent me from drinking from it, to the extent that I drink from the water of the (well that is in the house, and it is as salty as the water of the) sea." They said: "Yes, by Allah (we bear witness to that)." He further said: "I beseech you by Allah and Islam: do you know that I've prepared the army of Difficulty from my own wealth?" they said: "Yes, by Allah (we know that)." He said: "I beseech you by Allah and Islam: do you know that the mosque became too narrow to imply its visitors, thereupon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: 'He, who purchases the piece of land of so and so, therewith to increase the area of the mosque, will have what is better than it in the Garden'? I then purchased it from my own wealth, therewith

I increased the area of the mosque; even though you now prevent me from offering even a two-rak'ah prayer in it." They said: "Yes, by Allah (we know that)." He said: "I beseech you by Allah and Islam: do you know that once, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was on Thabir mountain of Mecca, in the company of Abu Bakr, Umar and I, and then the mountain trembled thereupon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" kicked it and said: 'Be at rest O Thabir! There is none on you other than a Prophet, a sincere affirmer and lover of truth and two martyrs'?" They said: "Yes, by Allah (we testify to that)." On that he said: "Allah is Greater! They testified to me, by the Lord of the Ka'bah, that I will be a martyr." (At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i).

The Death Of Ali "Allah Be Pleased With Him"

According to Al-Usbugh Al-Hanbali: When it was the night on which Ali "Allah be pleased with him" was fatally wounded, Ibn At-Tayyah came when dawn rose to proclaim Adhan for him, and he was lying in a state of heaviness. He proclaimed it once again, and he also did not get up. When he proclaimed it for the third time, he stood up and walked while saying: "Hasten to death for it is to afflict you, sooner or later, and do not be scared by death when it attacks you." When he reached the small gate, Ibn Miljam attacked and struck him. Umm Kulthum "Allah be pleased with her" came out and said: "What is the matter with me concerning the Morning prayer? In the Morning prayer, my husband (Umar) the Commander of Believers was killed, and in the Morning prayer also my father Ali was killed."

It is reported on the authority of an old man from Quraish that when Ali "Allah be pleased with him" was struck by Ibn Miljam, he said: "I have attained felicity, by the Lord of the Ka'bah."

It is reported on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Ali that when Ali "Allah be pleased with him" was struck, he advised his children, and then persisted in saying "There is none worthy of worship except for Allah" until he died.

When Al-Hassan Ibn Ali "Allah be pleased with them" became fatally ill, Al-Hussain "Allah be pleased with him" visited him and said: "O my brother! By which are you scared? You would go to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him", your fathers, Khadijah Bint Khuwailid and Fatimah "Allah be pleased with them", your mothers, and Hamzah and Ja'far "Allah be pleased with them", your paternal uncles." He said: "O my brother! The point is that I should come to something the like of which I have never come before."

CHAPTER FIVE

THE WORDS OF THE WOULD-BE DEAD FROM AMONG RULERS AND RIGHTEOUS

When death approached Mu'awiyah Ibn Abu Sufyan, he asked his companions to make him sit and they did. Then he glorified Allah and remembered him so much, after which he went on weeping and said: "Do you remember your Lord, O Mu'awiyah after you have grown very old and weak?

Why have you not done so during your youth and strength?" he persisted in weeping loudly, and said: "O Lord! Bestow mercy upon the disobedient harsh-hearted old man! O Allah! Remove the difficulty, forgive the slip, and be bountiful with Your forbearance on him who does not hope but in You."

It is reported that the last sermon delivered by Mu'awiyah before his death is his saying: "O people! Whoever cultivates should necessarily harvest the produce of his cultivation. I have been the ruler over you, and none would be ruler over you after me but that he would be worse than me, just as those rulers before me were better than me. O Yazid (his son)! When it is time for my appointed term, let one endued with sound mind wash my dead body, for such as endued with sound mind has a good position in the Sight of Allah Almighty. Let him wash me perfectly, and raise his voice with Takbir. Then, bring from the store a garment belonging to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and a remnant of his hair and nails: place that remnant on my mouth, nose, ears and eyes, and let the garment over my skin before the shrouds. O Yazid! Keep the bequest of Allah Almighty in your parents. Once you place me in my shrouds and then inter me into my hole, let Mu'awiyah be alone with Allah, the Most Merciful of those who are merciful."

It is reported that when death approached Abd-Al-Malik Ibn Marwan, he saw a washer in the precincts of Damascus twisting a dress he was washing, and striking the washing machine with it. on seeing him Abd-Al-Malik said: "Would that I am like this washer earning my living from the labour of my hand day by day, and was not in charge of anything in this world." When the news of that reached Abu Hazim, he said: "All perfect praise be to Allah that when death approaches the like of them, they hope to be in the very state in which we are, unlike us, for when death approaches anyone of us, he does not hope to be in their state."

It was said to Abd-Al-Malik Ibn Marwan when he grew fatally ill: "How do you feel O Commander of Believers?" he said: "I feel I am the same as described by Allah Almighty in His statement: "And behold! you come to Us bare and alone as We created you for the first time: you have left behind you all (the favours) which We bestowed on you: We see not with you your intercessors whom you thought to be partners in your affairs: so now all relations between you have been cut off, and your (pet) fancies have left you in the lurch!" (Al-An'am 94)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَادَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُم مَّا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا نَرَىٰ مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاءُ ۚ لَقَد تَّقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنكُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ ﴾

Then, he died immediately.

Fatimah Bint Abd-Al-Malik, the wife of Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz said: I used to hear Umar saying during the very illness in which he died: "O Allah! Hide my death from them for even as short as an hour of the day." When it was the day on which he died, I came out from his chamber and sat in another dwelling, and there was a door between me and him. Then I heard him reciting: "That House of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not high-handedness or

mischief on earth: and the End is (best) for the righteous." (Al-Qasas 83)

﴿ تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۚ وَٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

Then, there was silence, and I no longer heard any voice or movement. I said to a servant belonging to him: "See whether he is sleeping." When he entered he cried and I jumped and behold! He died.

It is reported that when he grew fatally ill, a physician was invited to see him and he said to him: "I see that the man was given poison, and I do not feel safe from death on him." On that Umar raised his sight and said to him: "And you also could not feel safe from death on such as is not given poison." The physician asked him: "Then, have you felt it O Commander of Believers?" he said: "Yes, I knew that when it fell into my abdomen." He said: "Then, treat yourself O Commander of Believers." He said: "No, how best is that to Whom I would go. By Allah! Were I to know that my remedy would be at my earlobe, I would not raise my hand to my ear to take it. O Allah! Choose the best for Umar concerning Your meeting." It was only a few days after which he died.

It is said that a short time before his death, he ordered his men to make him sit and they did. Then he said: "O Allah! I am the one whom You commanded, and he disobeyed Your command, whom You forbade and he did not desist." He said it thrice after which he said: "But there is none worthy of worship except for Allah." Then, he raised his sight and kept staring. When he was asked about that he said: "I see green beings who are neither jinn nor men." Then he died immediately, may Allah bestow mercy upon him.

It is related that when death approached Harun Ar-Rashid, he chose his shrouds by himself and recited: "Of no profit to me has been my wealth! My power has perished from me!" (Al-Haqqah 28-29)

﴿ مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّى مَالِيَهْ ۜ ﴿٢٨﴾ هَلَكَ عَنِّى سُلْطَٰنِيَهْ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾

Al-Ma'mun spread out ashes and lay on it and said: "O He Whose dominion never perishes! Bestow mercy upon him whose kingdom perishes."

Al-Mu'tasim said during his fatal illness: "Had I known how short my lifetime is, I would not have such and such things."

Al-Hajjaj said at his last breaths: "O Allah! Forgive for me, for the people say that You would never forgive for me." However, Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz admired this statement from him, the like of which he aspired for himself. When Al-Hassan was told about that, he said: "Has he really said it?" the answer was in the affirmative, thereupon he said: "It may be."

Explication Of Statements Of A Set Of Righteous From Among The Companions And Their Followers

When death approached Mu'adh Ibn Jabal "Allah be pleased with him" he said: "O Allah! Before that, I feared You. But now I have hope in You. O Allah! You know well that I have not liked survival in this world for its flowing rivers and trees, but for going to prayer in the mosque when it was very hot, spending the long hours in worship of You, and sitting in the company of the learned scholars in the gatherings of remembrance of You."

When death approached Salman "Allah be pleased with him" he went on weeping. Being asked about that, he said: "I do not weep because of being scared by losing this world. But the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" advised us that anyone of us should take from this world only the like of a rider's provision." (Ahmad and Al-Hakim). When Salman "Allah be pleased with him" died, all that he left was over ten Dirhams.

When death approached Bilal "Allah be pleased with him" his wife said: "How sad am I!" on that he said: "But rather, how elated am I! tomorrow we would meet the beloved, Muhammad and his companions."

When death approached Abdullah Ibn Al-Mubarak, he opened his eyes and said: "It is for the like of this that the workers should work!"

When death approached Ibrahim An-Nakh'i, he wept. Having been asked about the reason, he said: "I expect a messenger from Allah to give me either the glad tidings of Paradise or the news of the fire of Hell."

When death approached Ibn Al-Munkadir he wept. Being asked about that he said: "By Allah, I do not weep for a sin I knew I had committed (intentionally), but I weep for fear I might have committed a thing which I regarded insignificant, even though it is grievous in the Sight of Allah."

When death approached Amir Ibn Abd-Al-Qais, he wept. Being asked about that he said: "I do not weep for I am scared by death, nor because I am greedy for this world. But I weep for what would escape me of going to prayer in the mosque whenever it is very hot by day, and standing at night for prayer whenever it is very cold in winter."

When death approached Ibn Al-Mubarak, he asked Nasr, his freed slave, to place his head over dust. He wept and Ibn Al-Mubarak asked him about the reason for his weeping, thereupon he said: "I remembered the blissful life which you had led, and the state of poverty and destitution in which you die now." He said to him: "Keep silent! I asked Allah Almighty to make me live the living of the rich and wealthy, and cause me to die the death of the poor and destitute." Then, he said to him: "Dictate the testimony of faith to me, and do not repeat it to me so long as I do not utter anything else."

It is related that one of the righteous wept at his death, and when he was asked about the reason he told that he did so because of the following Qur'anic Verse: "Surely," said the former, "Allah does accept of the sacrifice of those who are righteous." (Al-Ma'idah 27)

﴿ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

It was said to Al-Junaid at his last breaths: "Say 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah'." He said: "I have never forgotten Him in order to remember Him."

It is further reported that Ja'far Ibn Nusair asked the servant of Ash-Shibli about what he had seen from him when death approached him, thereupon he said: "He said: "I owe somebody a Dirham from whom I took unjustly, and although I have given thousands of Dirhams in charity on behalf of its owner, nothing concerns me more than it." then, he told me to help him perform ablution for prayer. I did accordingly, and forgot to make the water enter in

between the hair of his beard, thereupon, being unable to speak, he caught hold of my hand and got it into his beard. Then he died." On that Ja'far wept and said: "What do you say about a man whom nothing of the etiquettes of Sharia has ever escaped him even during his last breaths?"

It was said to Bishr Ibn Al-Harith when death approached him, and it was heavy on him: "It seems as if you like life." On that eh said: "The coming to the presence of Allah Almighty is very difficult."

It was said to Salih Ibn Mismar: "Would you not entrust your children to anyone to look after their affairs?" on that eh said: "I feel shy of Allah Almighty to entrust them to anyone other than Him."

When death approached Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani, his companions came to visit him and said to him: "Receive the glad tidings for you are going to the Lord, Who is Most Merciful, Oft-Forgiving." On that he said: "And why do you not tell me to be careful since I am going to the Lord Who accounts one for the trivial misdeed, and punishes him for the major misdeed?"

When death approached Abu Bakr Al-Wasiti, his companions asked him to advise them, thereupon he said: "Preserve what is intended from you by (Allah) the Truth."

One of the righteous came to his last breaths thereupon his wife wept for him. He asked her: "What causes you to weep?" She said: "I weep for (the loss of) you." On that he said: "If you are to weep, then, weep for yourself, because I have been weeping in expectation for that day for forty years."

It was said to Al-Kinani when death approached him: "What was your deed in this life?" he said: "Had it not been for the fact that it is time for my appointed term, I would not have told you. However, I have been standing at the gate of my heart for forty years, to prevent anything other than Allah Almighty from entering into it."

It is reported that Al-Muzni entered upon Ash-Shafi'i to visit him during his fatal illness in which he died and asked him: "How have you been O Abu Abdullah?" he said: "I have been on the way of departure from that world, leaving my companions, facing the evil of my deed, drinking the cup of death, and coming to Allah Almighty, and I do not know whether my soul would go to Paradise so that I would congratulate it, or to the fire of Hell so that I would console it."

Those are samples of their statements. They differed by their different states: Some were possessed by fear, others by hope, and others by longing and love; and each of them spoke in accordance with his particular state. Each of them is true and valid in comparison with his own state.

CHAPTER SIX

OPINIONS OF THE LEARNED ABOUT FUNERALS AND GRAVES; AND RULING ON VISITING GRAVES

It should be known to you that funeral processions are a lesson for the insightful to consider, and a notification and remembrance for the heedless to take. But unfortunately, in those days, seeing them does but increases the heedless in harshness and severity, for they think that they would never come to

the day on which their dead bodies would be carried like others, or even if they think so, they could hardly imagine it to occur within a short time. For this reason, no servant sees a funeral procession but that he imagines he would be laid as such on a similar bier; And it would be very close in time, say tomorrow, within a week, a month, a year, or so, although he might know not.

It is narrated that whenever Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" saw a funeral procession, he would say: "Proceed on, for we are going to join you (O deceased) sooner."

It is reported that whenever Makhul Ad-Dimashqi saw a funeral procession, he would say: "Go on, for we are going to join you (O deceased) later: it is but an instructive admonition, and a quick heedlessness. The first goes, while the last remains mindless."

According to Usaid Ibn Hudair "Allah be pleased with him": "I have never witnessed a funeral procession but that my self talked to me about the destiny the deceased was going to, and what would happen to him."

When the brother of Malik Ibn Dinar died, Malik attended his funeral procession and went on weeping and saying: "By Allah, I would not get comforted until I know to which destiny you are going, and of course, I would never know that so long as I am living."

According to Al-A'mash: "We attended the funeral procession and did not know whom we should console for the state of grief that overwhelmed all."

As such the righteous predecessors feared of death. But nowadays, most of those who attend the funeral processions are involved in laughter and chat with each other, and do not talk but about the legacy of the deceased. But none of them thinks about his own funeral and the day on which he would be laid on a bier. There is no reason for such heedlessness other than the harshness of hearts because of the numerous sins committed by the majority of people, to the extent that we forgot Allah Almighty and the Last day.

We ask Allah Almighty to rescue us from that heedlessness. The attendants of funeral processions, in those days, at their best state, weep for the deceased, and were they to consider the matter more accurately, they should then weep for themselves more than for the dead. Once Ibrahim Az-Zayyat looked at a people invoking mercy upon a deceased, thereupon he said to them: "Were you to invoke mercy upon themselves, it would be better for you. As for him, he has been saved from three terrors: The face of the angel of death, and he has indeed seen it, the bitterness of death, and he has really tasted it, and the fear of the conclusion, and he has become secure from it."

Among the etiquettes of attending funeral processions is to engage in reflection and meditation, to take heed (of the matter of death), to get ready for death, to walk ahead of it with humbleness, to the end of this series of its related etiquettes and ways we have already mentioned in the science of jurisprudence. One of its etiquettes too is to have good assumption of the deceased even if he seems wicked, and have bad assumption of yourself even if you seem righteous. That is because the conclusion is very risky, and its reality is unpredictable.

It is related that a neighbour of Umar Ibn Dharr died, and he used to

transgress against himself, thereupon most people disdained to attend his funeral procession. But Umar attended it and offered funeral prayer on him and when he was interred in the grave he stood at its gate and said: "May Allah bestow mercy upon you O so and so. You have occupied your lifetime in monotheism (affirming the oneness of Allah), and engaged yourself in prostration (i.e. offered much prayers); and if they describe you as a sinful, then, who among us does not err or commit sins?"

It is reported that a man who was involved in wickedness in Basra died and his wife found none to help her prepare his funeral, for none among his neighbours knew about it due to his extreme dissoluteness. She then hired porters to carry his dead body laid on a bier to the praying place in order for funeral prayer to be offered on him, but none offered funeral prayer on him. She then carried his dead body on the bier to the desert in order to be buried there. On a near mountain, there was a great famous ascetic, whom she saw as if he were expecting for the dead body on the bier. He descended from the mountain to offer prayer on the dead. Soon, the news became in circulation in the city that so and so, the famous ascetic descended to offer prayer on so and so of men. Consequently, the inhabitants of the town came out and offered funeral prayer on the man along with the ascetic. The people then wondered about how the ascetic should offer prayer on such a wicked man. On that he said to them: "It was said to me in a dream: 'Descend to such and such a place, where you would find a dead body on a bier and none with it other than a woman, and then offer funeral prayer on him, for his sins would be forgiven for him.'" The people became more astonished. The ascetic invited the wife and asked her about the state and conduct of her husband. She said: "He was as it was known of him: Spending the whole day in the brothel drinking wine." He asked her: "Well. Do you know anything good he used to do?" She said: "He used to do three good things: In the morning of everyday, he used to awake from his intoxication, change his garment, perform ablution and offer Morning prayer in congregation in the mosque, after which he would return to the brothel to resume drinking. The second is that his house always had one or two orphans to whom he was more kind than he was to his children. The third is that he used to awake from his intoxication during the darkness of night and weep and say: "O Lord! Which corner of the corners of Hell do You like to fill with such a wicked?" He meant himself. Thus, the ascetic went away after he had found a solution for that problematic dilemma.

Explication Of The State Of The Dead In The Grave, And Their Statements At The Graves

It is reported on the authority of Ad-Dahhak that a man asked the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! Who is the most abstinent among the people?" he said: "He, who never forgets the grave and disaster, leaves the surplus adornment and ornament of this world, prefers what is enduring to what is perishable, does not regard the next day one of his days, and rather considers himself from among the dwellers of the graves."

It was said to Ali "Allah be pleased with him": "What is the matter with you

that you live in the neighbourhood of the graves?" He said: "I find the dead good neighbours, and they are neighbours of truth: They always hold back their tongues (from evil talk),and remember the hereafter."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I have never seen a terrible scene but that the grave is more horrible than it."

It is reported on the authority of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: "One day, we set out in the company of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" until we came to a grave and he sat and I was the nearest of men to him. He wept and I and they wept subsequently. He asked them: "What causes you to weep?" We said: "We wept for your weeping." On that he said: "That is the grave of my mother Aminah Bint Wahb, and I sought the permission of my Lord to visit it, and He gave me permission, and when I sought His permission to invoke forgiveness for her, he rejected, thereupon I was overpowered by sympathy like a child for his mother." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Ibn Majah).

It was the habit of Uthman "Allah be pleased with him" that whenever he stood at a grave, he would weep so much until his beard would be wetted. He was asked about the reason and it was said to him: "Whenever a mention is made of Paradise and fire, you would not weep, and whenever you stand at a grave, you would weep." On that he said: No doubt, I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "The grave is the first station of the hereafter: If man is saved from it, then, what is beyond it would be easier; and if he is not saved from it, then, what is beyond it would be more difficult." (At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim).

It is reported that when Amr Ibn Al-As saw a grave, he dismounted and offered a two-rak'ah prayer. It was said to him: "You did a thing which you have never done before." On that he said: "I remembered the dwellers of the graves, and the barrier that is between him and them, thereupon I liked to come closer to Allah Almighty through them."

Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Should I not tell you about the day of my poverty? It is the day on which I would be in the grave."

It was the habit of Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" to sit near the graves. When he was asked about that he said: "I sit with a people who always remind me of my place of return (in the hereafter), and whenever I stand and leave them, they never backbite me."

According to Hatim Al-Assamm: "Whoever comes upon the graves, and does not contemplate his state, nor invoke good for the inhabitants of the graves, he indeed has betrayed both them and his own self."

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh used to say: "O son of Adam! Your Lord has invited you to the abode of peace. So, consider from where you would answer His invitation: If you answer His invitation from your world, and engage in your journey to Him, you surely would enter that abode; and if you answer His invitation starting only from your being in the grave, of a surety, you would be prevented from it."

Whenever Al-Hassan Ibn Salih saw a graveyard he would say: "How good is your outside, and how grievous is your inside."

According to Sufyan: "Whoever remembers the grave more often, would find it one of the gardens of Paradise; and whoever is heedless of remembering it would find it one of the holes of the fire of Hell."

Ar-Rabie Ibn Khaithamah dug a grave in his house. Whenever eh felt a bit harsh-hearted, he would go and lie in it as long as Allah willed him to lie, and then recite: "O my Lord! send me back (to life), In order that I may work righteousness in the things I neglected." (Al-Mu'minun 99-100)

﴿ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱرْجِعُونِ ۝ لَعَلِّىٓ أَعْمَلُ صَـٰلِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ ۝ ﴾

Then, he would stand and say: "O Rabie! You have been given what you asked for. Then, do righteous works before you ask for return and are given no answer."

Maimun Ibn Muhran said: I set out in the company of Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz to the graveyard and when he looked at the graves he wept so much. Then he said to me: "O Maimun! Those are the graves of my forefathers from the Umayyads. They seem now as if they did not share the inhabitants of this world its delights and pleasures. Do you not see them lying, with their bodies mutilated and devoured by insects?" Then he wept and said: "By Allah, I do not know that anyone of those who went to the graves and were safe from the punishment of Allah Almighty has ever been blessed."

According to Thabit Al-Bunani: "I entered the graveyards and when I intended to come out a voice said to me: "O Thabit! Do not be deceived by the silence of those, for how many a soul that is distressed here."

It is reported that when Fatimah Bint Al-Hussain saw the dead body of her husband Al-Hassan Ibn Al-Hassan, she covered her face and said: "They were hopeful (in this life), and now they have been stricken with disaster. How great and heinous are those disasters." It is said that she pitched a tent near his grave in which she stayed in seclusion for a year, and when the year elapsed, they put off the tent and she returned to Medina. Once she entered Medina, they heard a voice coming from one side of Al-Baqi' saying: "Have they found what they had lost?" They heard a response from the other side saying: "Nay! They have despaired and thus returned."

It is then the insightful who looks at his place among the inhabitants of the graves, and gets ready for the day on which he is going to join them, putting in mind that if a single day of his lifetime which he is wasting in vain is offered to them, it would be dearer to them than the whole world with what it contains, for they knew the value of the lifetime, and the real nature of things were revealed to them. They grieve for a single day of the lifetime in order for the negligent among them to mend his negligence, and thus get rid of punishment; and for the successful among them to elevate his rank high and high, and thus multiply his reward. But unfortunately, they knew the value of the lifetime after its termination. That is why they grieve for even a single hour of it. But although this hour and many times the like of it besides is available to you so long as you are living, you waste it in vain. So, habituate yourself to grieve for wasting it before the matter comes out of the sphere of your choice, if you do not hasten to take your share from your hour.

One of the righteous said: I saw in a dream one of my deceased brothers and I said: "All perfect praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds." He said: "To be able to say it now is dearer to me than the entire world and all that it contains." Then he said to me: "Do you not see where they buried me? There, so and so stood and offered a two-rak'ah prayer. Indeed, to be able to do the same now is dearer to me than the entire world and all that it contains."

Explication of their statements at the death of one's child

It is incumbent upon such as whose child or relative dies to regard him ahead of him in a journey and sooner or later, he is going to join him there. So, he should not grieve for him, for he knows well that he is going to join him, and that there is nothing between them other than the time. If one has such a belief, his fright and grief would decrees, given that there is a lot of narrations confirming a great reward for the death of one's child so much that it consoles everyone for his calamity.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "To lose a little babe because of miscarriage is dearer to me than to leave behind me one hundred horsemen all of whom fighting in the Cause of Allah." (Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah with a slight variation of wording). Miscarriage is intended here to show, with the lesser, the value of the greater, otherwise, the reward is determined by the position of the child from the heart.

Zaid Ibn Aslam said: A child belonging to David "peace be upon him" died for whom he grieved so much. It was said to him: "What is his value in your sight?" he said: "As much gold as to fill the whole earth." It was said to him: "Then, you would get in the hereafter a reward like that."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "None among the Muslims loses three of his children by death, and he expects the reward for their death from Allah Almighty but that they would be a protective shield to veil him from the fire (of Hell)." A woman who was present in the house of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Or even two?" He said: "Or even two."

On the other hand, a parent should be sincere in his invocation for his child at his death, because it is the most rewardable invocation, for which answer is expected most. On that occasion, Muhammad Ibn Sulaiman stood at the grave of his child and said: "O Allah! I now come to have hope in You for him, and fear You on him. So, please, realize my hope and secure my fear."

Abu Sinan stood at the grave of his child and said: "O Allah! I have excused him for what is due on him to me. So, please, O Allah, forgive for him what is due on him to You, for You are most Generous and Most Bounteous."

A Bedouin stood at the grave of his child and said: "O Allah! I have granted to him my share of the dutifulness of which he ran short towards me. So, please, O Allah, grant to him Your share of obedience of which he ran short towards You."

When Dharr Ibn Umar Ibn Dharr died, his father Umar Ibn Dharr said after he had placed him in the grave: "O Dharr! Our grief for your sake has diverted us from our grief on you. What have you said, and what has been said to you in the

grave?" then he said by way of supplication: "O Allah! That is Dharr, of whom You have enjoyed me as much as You willed, and fulfilled for him his appointed term and sustenance with justice. O Allah! You have enjoined upon him to obey You and me. O Allah! I grant to him The reward You have promised me for my calamity concerning his death: so, please, grant to me his punishment and punish him not." He thus caused the attendants to weep. When he turned away he said: "We have nothing to do now O Dharr, and we have no need from anyone other than Allah. So, we are going to leave you, and were we to stay any longer, we would not avail you in the least."

A man saw a woman in Basrah and said: "I have never seen the like of that cheerful woman." He referred to the absence of grief from her face. But she said: "O so and so! I have of grief and sorrow what none else shares me in." He said to her: "How is that?" She said: "My husband slaughtered a sheep in the feast, and I had two young good-looking boys. While they were playing the eldest said to the youngest: "Do you like me to show you how our father slaughtered that sheep?" He said: "Yes, show me." He took hold of the knife and slaughtered him, and none knew about that until he was seen being agitated in his blood. When the cries were loud, his brother fled away to a near mountain, where a wolf snatched and ate him. His father came out in search for him and he died out of thirsty because of the scorching heat. Do you see then how the time has ruined me?".

At the death of children, the like of those calamities should be remembered in order to console the parents for their severe anxiety. There is no calamity but that a greater one could be imagined, and the majority are averted by Allah Almighty in whichever state one might be.

Explication Of Visiting The Graves And Supplication For The Deceased

Visiting the graves in general is favorable in order for people to remember and take consideration therefrom; and visiting the graves of the righteous in particular is favorable to seek blessing therewith, along with admonition. It is known that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" had first forbidden visiting the graves. But afterwards, he gave permission for visiting them that cancelled his forbiddance.

In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I had already forbidden you to visit graves. But now you may visit them (if you so like), for it reminds you of the hereafter, provided that you should avoid obscenity in word." (Ahmad).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" himself visited the grave of his mother Aminah in the company of one thousand of his companions, and on that day, none was seen more weeping than him. (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya). On that day he said: "I was given permission to visit (her grave), but not to pray forgiveness (for her)."

Ibn Abu Mulaikah said: One day, A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" returned from the graveyard, and I said to her: "O Mother of Believers! From

where have you returned now?" She said: "From the grave of my brother Abd-Ar-Rahman." I asked her: "Is it not that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" forbade visiting the graves?" She said: "Yes, but later on, he commanded us to visit them." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

But we should not depend on that Hadith in giving permission to women to visit the graves, for they more often utter obscenity there. So, no good lies in their visiting them, let alone the probability of the unlawful display of their adornment and beauty on the way. To visit a grave is an act of sunnah, but if it is to lead to the woman's unlawful display of her adornment and beauty on the way, it should be prevented. However, there is no harm on the woman to come out wearing untidy clothes that avert the eyes of men from her, provided that she should limit herself to supplication and avoid obscenity.

It is reported on the authority of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Visit the graves perchance you would remember therewith the hereafter, and wash the dead bodies, for seeing an empty body is an instructive admonition, and offer funeral prayer on the dead, perchance that would aggrieve you, for the sad remains in the shade of Allah Almighty."

It is reported on the authority of Ibn Abu Mulaikah that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Visit your dead (in their graves) and greet them with peace, for in them you have a lesson to learn." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is reported on the authority of Nafi' that never Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" passed by a grave, but that he would stand at it and greet with peace its dwellers.

It is further narrated on the authority of Ja'far Ibn Muhammad from his father that Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet "peace be upon him" used to visit the grave of her paternal uncle Hamzah and pray and weep at it.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever visits the grave of his parents or at least one of them once every Friday, his sins are forgiven for him, and he is written as dutiful." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Hurairah; and Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Muhammad Ibn An-Nu'man).

It is reported on the authority of Ibn Sirin that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "One's parents might die and he is disobedient to them in this world, but when he supplicates Allah to good for them after their death, he is written by Allah among the dutiful." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya; and Ibn Adi on the authority of Anas).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever visits a grave, then, my intercession is assured to him."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever visits me in Medina, expecting the reward of that from Allah, I would be an intercessor and a witness to him on the Day of Judgement."

According to Ka'b Al-Ahbar "Allah be pleased with him": "No dawn rises but that seventy thousand angels descend and surround the grave (of the

Prophet),and flirt with their wings, and invoke blessing and peace upon the Prophet "peace be upon him" until when it is evening they ascend and others like them descend and do the same, until when the earth would split open (on the Day of Judgment), he "peace be upon him" would come out surrounded by seventy thousand angels out of veneration and reverence for him."

It is favorable, in visiting the grave, to turn one's back to the Qiblah and face the dead, and greet him with peace, but neither pass his hand over the grave, nor touch nor kiss it. Nafi' said: I saw Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" more than one hundred times, having come to the grave (of the Prophet) and said: "Peace be upon the Prophet! Peace be upon Abu Bakr! Peace be upon my father!" then, he would turn away immediately.

It is reported on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No man visits the grave of his brother and sits at his grave for some time but that he becomes affable with him and responds to him until he leaves." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya; and Ibn Abd-Al-Barr on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

Sulaiman Ibn Suhaim said: I saw the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in a dream and asked him: "O Messenger of Allah! As for those who come to visit your grave and pay you salutation: Do you learn their greeting?" He "peace be upon him" said: "Yes, and I also return the greeting to them."

According to Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him": "If a man comes upon the grave of another man whom he knows and pays him salutation, he (the deceased) would return the greeting to him; and if he comes upon the grave of a man whom he does not know, and pays him salutation, he would also return the greeting to him."

It is reported that Muhammad Ibn Wasi' used to visit the graves every Friday. It was said to him: "Would that you delay it to Monday!" On that he said: "I was informed that the inhabitants of the graves know about their visitors on Friday, and a day before and a day after it."

According to Ad-Dahhak: "Whoever visits a grave before sunrise on Saturday, the deceased would know about his visit." It was said to him: "How is that?" He said: "That is due to the high position of Friday."

According to Bishr Ibn Mansur: When it was the time of plague, there was a man who used to frequent the graveyard and offer funeral prayer on the dead there, and when it was evening, he would stand at the gate of the graveyard saying (by way of invocation): "May Allah remove your loneliness, eliminate your alienation, excuse your misdeeds and accept your good deeds." He used to say no more than those words. The man himself said: One night I returned home and did not go to the graveyard and supplicate as I used to do. While I was sleeping, I saw in a dream as if a lot of people came to me. I asked them: "Who are you and what is your need from me?" They said: "We are the dwellers of the graves." I asked them: "Then, why have you come?" they said: "You have accustomed us to a gift from you whenever you return home in the evening." I said: "What is that?" They said: "The supplication therewith you

used to supplicate for us." I said: "Then, I would return to do so." I then have never left it from that night."

Bashshar Ibn Ghalib An-Najrani said: I saw in my dream Rabi'ah Al-Adawiyyah and I used to supplicate Allah for her more often. She said to me: "O Bashshar Ibn Ghalib! Your gifts come to us on plates of light covered with handkerchiefs of silk." I asked her: "How is that?" She said: "As such is the supplication of the living believers when they invoke good upon the dead: if their supplications receive answer, they would be placed on plates of light covered with silk handkerchiefs, and then brought to the dead and said to him: "That is the gift of so and so to you."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The dead in his grave is but like a drowned seeking relief, in expectation for a supplication to attach himself to, from his father, brother, friend, or so. Once he gets attached to it, it becomes dearer to him than the entire world and all that it contains. Furthermore, the gifts of the living to the dead are supplication and prayer of forgiveness for them." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

It is favorable to dictate good words to the deceased after his burial. It is narrated on the authority of Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Al-Azdi that he said: I was present when Abu Umamah Al-Bahili "Allah be pleased with him" came to his last breaths. He said to me: "O Sa'id! If I die, then, do with me the same as the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" commanded us to do. He "peace be upon him" said: "If anyone of you dies and you finish from his burial and level the earth over his dead body, then, let anyone of you stand at the head of his grave and say: "O so and so, son of such and such a woman!" he indeed does not answer. Then let him say for the second time: "O so and so, son of such and such a woman!" by that he stands up straightly. Then, let him say for the third time: "O so and so, son of such and such a woman!" the deceased then says: "Guide us may Allah bestow mercy upon you." But you hear him not. Then, let him say: "Remember the very state on which you have come out of this world, i.e. the testimony that there is none worthy of worship except for Allah, and that Muhammad "peace be upon him" is the Messenger of Allah; and that you have approved Allah as your Lord, Islam as your religion, Muhammad "peace be upon him" as your Prophet, and the Holy Qur'an as your leading guide." By saying so, both Munkar and Nakir move backward and say to each other: "Let's go. What makes us sit with one who is dictated his proof?" Thus, Allah Almighty becomes his defender against them." A man asked: "O Messenger of Allah! If he does not know the name of his mother (what should he do?)" on that he said: "He then should attribute him to Eve." (At-Tabarani).

There is no harm to recite the Holy Qur'an on the graves. In this issue, it is reported on the authority of Ali Ibn Musa Al-Hada' that he said: I was with Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in a funeral procession, and Muhammad Ibn Qudamah was with us. When the dead was buried, a blind man came and recited Qur'an on the grave. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal said to him: "O man! Recitation of the Qur'an at the grave is a religious innovation." But when we came out of the graveyard,

Muhammad Ibn Qudamah said to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal: “O Abu Abdullah! What do you say about Mubashshir Ibn Isma’il Al-Halabi?” He said: “A reliable.” He asked him once again: “Have you transmitted anything from him?” Ahmad answered in the affirmative. On that Muhammad said: “Mubashshir Ibn Isma’il told me from Abd-Ar-Rahman Ibn Al-Ala’ that his father bequeathed the opening and concluding Verses of Al-Baqarah to be recited at the head of his grave if he was buried, reporting that he heard Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" giving the same bequest.” Ahmad said to him: “Then, return to the blind man and tell him to recite (if he so likes).”

According to Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Al-Marwazi: I heard Ahmad Ibn Hanbal recommending that “If you enter the graveyard, recite Al-Fatihah (1) and Al-Mu’awwidhatain (113-114) along with “Say, He is Allah, the One and Only” (112), and grant the reward of that to the inhabitants of the graves, for it indeed reaches them.”

Visiting the graves then is intended, for the visitor to take consideration thereby, and for the dead to benefit from his supplication. This is why the visitor should not be heedless of invocation of good for himself and for the dead, nor of taking consideration and learning lessons thereby. He takes consideration when he imagines how the dead has turned into bones decomposed, exposed to insects and larva, and how those scattered parts of his body would be gathered together in order for the dead to be raised once again in the hereafter, and how he would join him sooner or later.

In this respect, it is reported on the authority of Mutarrif Ibn Abu Bakr Al-Hudhali that he said: There was a good worshipping old lady: whenever it was night, she would straighten her garments over her body and go to her praying place to perform prayer for the whole night; and whenever it was day, she would go to the graves. She was blamed for her frequenting the graves so much. In her reply to that she said: “It should be known that when the harsh heart becomes hard, nothing softens it other than the image of decomposed bones in the graves. I come to the graves and imagine as if the dead have come from the layers of the graves and I look at those faces covered with dust, and at these changing bodies.”

Furthermore, it is favorable to praise the dead and mention him only with good words. It is reported on the authority of A’ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “When anyone of you dies, then, leave his (evil deeds), and do not abuse him.” (Abu Dawud).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: “Abuse not the dead, for (when they die), they come to what they have sent forward (of their deeds, be they good or evil).” (Al-Bukhari on the authority of A’ishah "Allah be pleased with her").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said too: “Mention your dead only with good words: if they are from among the inhabitants of Paradise, you then would be sinful (if you abuse them), and if they are from among the denizens of the fire (of Hell), then, it would be sufficient for them the very state in which they are.” (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and An-Nasa’i on the authority of A’ishah).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him"

that he said: A funeral procession passed and the people praised the deceased. The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "It has been affirmed to him." Then another funeral procession passed and the people spoke badly of the deceased. The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "It has been affirmed to him." Umar Ibn Al-Khattab asked him: "What has been affirmed?" He replied: "You praised this, so Paradise has been affirmed to him; and you spoke badly of this, so Hell has been affirmed to him. You people are Allah's witnesses on earth." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "A servant dies and the people praise him with good praise, and although otherwise Allah Almighty knows about him, He says to His angels: "I make you witnesses that I have accepted the testimony given by My (living) servant in favor of My (dead) servant, and closed My eyes to what I know about My servant." (Ahmad).

CHAPTER SEVEN

REAL NATURE OF DEATH; AND WHAT A DEAD RECEIVES IN THE GRAVE UNTIL THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPET

Explication Of Real Nature Of Death

It should be known to you that the people have different false assumptions about the real nature of death: some think it is nonexistence after which there would be no resurrection nor mustering, nor would there be consequences for good or evil, under pretext that the death of man is like that of animals and plants. That is indeed the opinion of the atheists and those who have no faith in Allah and the Last day. Others are of the opinion that one becomes nonexistent by death in a way that he receives neither harm nor reward so long as he is in the grave, until he is raised at the time of resurrection. A third group adopt the argument that souls never become nonexistent by death, for it is the souls which receive reward and punishment, and bodies would not be raised.

All of those are but false and invalid assumptions, that deviate from the truth. What is confirmed by the different signs, narrations and minds is that death is only a change in the state, and that the soul survives after its departure from the body, either in punishment or in bliss. That a soul leaves the body is to separate from it, and have no control or power of disposal of it. The organs and parts of the body are but instruments used by the soul: It strikes with the hand, hears with the ear, sees with the eye, and knows the real nature of things with the heart; and the heart is the place of the soul, and the soul learns things by itself, with no need of the assistance of any instrument. The soul then preserves its built-in attributes it has by itself after it departs from the body, and all that it gains by means of the organs and parts of body cease to function by the death of the body until it is restored to the body. However, it is unlikely that the soul might be restored to the body in the grave, and it is also not unlikely that it would be restored to it on the Day of Resurrection. Allah Almighty knows best what He dooms for each of His servants.

By soul, I mean that part in the man that perceives knowledge, senses pain, anxieties, pleasures and delights. If it loses its disposal and control over the organs of the body, its power of perception and sense does not cease to function. Man, in general, is that being that perceives knowledge, and senses pleasures and pains, and that meaning never dies, i.e. never becomes nonexistent by death. Death then is the cessation of his disposal and control over the organs and parts of his body. The reality of man is his own self and soul, which survives forever. But even, it is true that his state changes from two perspectives:

One is that he is deprived of his eye, ear, tongue, hand, foot, and all his organs and parts of body; of his family, relatives and acquaintances; and of his property, wealth and worldly benefits. The meaning of death then is that man is deprived of all his belongings and things in this world, and leaves for another world, that is quite difference from this world in which he lives. If he has in this world what he gets affable, comforted and concerned with, of course, he would grieve so much for leaving it after death, which he feels difficult on himself. But if he does not rejoice nor get affable but with the remembrance of Allah Almighty, of course, he would grow happier and more pleased once he is let alone with his beloved by death, and all obstacles and occupations are cut off from him, since all worldly means divert one from the remembrance of Allah Almighty. That is the first perspective of difference between the state of death and the state of life.

The other perspective is that in death, things are revealed to him which have never been disclosed to him during his life, in the same way as things might be revealed to the wakeful which are not disclosed to him during his sleep. All people are asleep, and once they die, they awake. The first to be revealed to the dead is what benefits or harms him of his good deeds and misdeeds, which are recorded in the depth of his heart, from which he is diverted by the worldly occupations, and if those occupations are cut off, all his deeds are revealed to him. He does not look at his misdeeds but that he grieves for them so much that he prefers to plunge into the fire if it is to deliver him from it. To such a servant, it would be said: "Read your (own) record; sufficient is your soul this day to make out an account against you." (Al-Isra' 14)

﴿ ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴾

All of this is revealed to him once his breaths cease and before he is buried. In this period, the yearning of departure from what he has left in this perishable world, from which he has not got provision for the end of the journey, is kindled within himself, unlike him, who has got from this world provision to convey hymn to the end of the journey: Once he arrives at the end of the journey, he would grow happy, and leave, with gladness and pleasure, the remaining provision, no matter much or less it might be. That is the state of him who takes from this world only the necessary requirements that are hardly enough to convey him to the hereafter. He suffers all those passions and pains in the period between the extermination of life and burial. At burial, his soul might probably be restored to his body, for another kind of punishment; and he might be pardoned, as Allah Almighty wills.

That is but a quick reference to the states of the dead after death, which have been revealed to the men endued with deep insights with internal contemplation, which is more powerful than the vision of the eye, and confirmed also by evidences from the Book and the sunnah. Nevertheless, the real nature of death could not be uncovered entirely, for none knows death who does not know life, and to know the real nature of life requires one to know the real nature of the soul in itself. But no permission was given to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" to talk about it, nor to say more than "The soul is of the affair of my Lord." (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ ﴾

(Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud). So, it is not fitting for anyone of the religious scholars to disclose the mystery of the soul even if he knows it. what is permitted is only to talk about the state of the soul after death.

There are a lot of Holy Qur'anic Verses and Prophet narrations that give evidence for the fact that death is not nonexistence of soul, nor of its perception. From among the Holy Verses, a mention may be made of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Think not of those who are slain in Allah's Way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the Presence of their Lord; They rejoice in the Bounty provided by Allah:. And with regard to those left behind, who have not yet joined them (in their bliss), the (Martyrs) glory in the fact that on them is no fear, nor have they (cause to) grieve." (Al Imran 169-170)

﴿ وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ۝ فَرِحِينَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِم مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝ ﴾

From among the Prophetic narrations, it is reported that on the day of Badr, The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" ordered that the corpses of twenty four leaders of Quraish should be thrown into one of the dirty dry wells of Badr. He ordered that his she-camel be saddled, then he set out, and his companions followed him. When he halted at the edge of the well, he addressed the corpses of the Quraish infidels by their names and their fathers' names, "O so-and-so, son of so-and-so and O so-and-so, son of so-and-so! We have found true what our Lord promised us. Have you too found true what your Lord promised you?" Umar said: "O Allah's Apostle! You are speaking to bodies that have no souls!" The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "By Him in Whose Hand Mohammad's soul is, you do not hear, what I say better than they do, except that they could not answer." (Muslim on the authority of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab).

The Prophetic narration confirms that the soul of a wicked survives in the state of wretchedness which it suffers extremely, whereas the Holy Qur'anic Verse proves that the soul of a martyr, who is a faithful believer, continues to be in the state of happiness and bliss, which it enjoys so much after death. Man could not but be in one of both states of happiness and wretchedness.

In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The grave is either one of the holes of the fire (of Hell), or one of the gardens of Paradise." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri). This is a clear statement that death is only a change in state, and the would-be happiness and wretchedness of the deceased are hastened on to him at his death with no delay, and what is postponed is only some kinds of punishment and reward, and not punishment and reward in principle.

It is reported on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that he said: "Death is resurrection: so, whoever dies, his resurrection has been established." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If anyone of you dies, then, his sitting place is shown to him every morning and evening, in Paradise if he is from among the inhabitants of Paradise, or in the fire (of Hell) if he is from among the denizens of the fire (of Hell), and it is said to him: 'That is your sitting place (and it awaits you) until you are raised on the Day of Judgement.'" (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn Umar).

It is reported on the authority of Abu Qais that he said: We were in the company of Alqamah in a funeral procession when he said: "As for that (deceased), his resurrection has been established."

Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said: "It is forbidden to a soul to come out of this world until it knows whether from among the inhabitants of Paradise or from among the denizens of the fire (of Hell) it would be."

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever dies as alien (from his homeland) would die as a martyr, according to which he would be safeguarded from the afflictions of the grave, and his sustenance from Paradise would be brought to him every morning and evening." (Ibn Majah and Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is reported on the authority of Abu Ya'li Ibn Al-Walid that he said: I was walking one day in the company of Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" when I asked him: "Which thing do you like for whomever you love?" He said: "Death." I further asked: "Then, if he does not die (what is next)?" He said: "The reduction of his property and children."

Indeed, he liked death for him because none likes death but a faithful believer, and death is to release one from his prison (in this world). Furthermore, he liked reduction of property and children for they are a source of temptation and a means to get affable with this world; and to get affable with such as you should inevitably leave is the farthest wretchedness. One should necessarily leave at death all other than Allah and His remembrance.

That is the significance of the statement of Abdullah Ibn Amr "Allah be pleased with him": "The state of a faithful believer, when his soul comes out from his body by death, is like the state of him who is released from prison after a long period of imprisonment, thereupon he tours and turns in the land wherever and however he likes."

That is the state of him who has desertion from this world, and is not affable but with the remembrance of Allah Almighty, and since the worldly occupations detain him from his beloved, and the suffering of desires and pleasures harms him, his salvation from all harmful evils lies in death, which enables him to be alone with his beloved. That is, indeed, the utmost of bliss. That the martyrs are given their pleasures and delights while being in the presence of their Lord Almighty goes back to the fact that when they set out in fighting, they cut off all their worldly pleasures and delights, out of longing for the meeting with Allah Almighty, and good pleasure with being killed in His Cause. If one in such a state looks at this world, he would sell it voluntarily for the hereafter, and the price does not concern him at all; and if he looks at the hereafter, he purchases it out of longing for it. how joyful is he of what he purchases once he sees it, and how careless is he of what he sells once he leaves it.

The meaning of bliss is that man obtains what he likes and desires for; and that is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "And they have therein what they desire for." (An-Nahl 57)

﴿ وَلَهُم مَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴾

That is the most comprehensive statement indicative of the pleasures and delights of Paradise. Contrastingly, the greatest punishment is that a man is prevented from that which he wishes for, as confirmed by Allah Almighty in his statement: "And between them and their desires, is placed a barrier." (Saba' 54)

﴿ وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴾

That is the most comprehensive expression pinpointing to the punishment received by the denizens of the fire of Hell. That is perceived by those endued with deep insights, by virtue of the light of certainty of faith. If you like an evidence for it from the transmitted narrations, below is a set of those:

It is narrated on the authority of Talhah Ibn Khirash: I heard Jabir Ibn Abdullah "Allah be pleased with them" having said: When Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Haram (Jabir's father) was killed on the day of (the holy battle of) Uhud, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" met me and said: "O Jabir! Would I not tell you with what Allah met your father?" I said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah (tell me): May Allah give you glad tidings (of Paradise)!" He said: "Never has Allah spoken to anyone (in the world) but from behind a screen; and He spoke direct to your father. He brought him to life once again, made him sit in front of Him and said: "O my servant! Ask for (whatever you like) so that I would give it to you." He said: "O Lord! By the right of my worship of You during my lifetime, send me back to life so that I would fight and be killed in Your Cause once again." The Lord Almighty said: "It has been decreed earlier by Me that to it (the life of world) those (who die) never return." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of A'ishah; At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Jabir).

Ka'b "Allah be pleased with him" said: "In Paradise, there is a man who is weeping, to whom it was said: "Why are you weeping and you are in Paradise?"

he said: "I am weeping for I was killed in the Cause of Allah only once, and I desire to be sent back to life in order to be killed in His Cause many times."

Furthermore, it should be known to you that after death, it is revealed to the faithful believer of the immensity and extensiveness of the glory and majesty of Allah that which, if the entire world is compared with it, it would seem as narrow as a dark prison. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" set forth an example for that when he said about a man who died: "This man has departed from this world, and left it for its people. If he is pleased, then, he would not rejoice to return to this world once again, just as anyone of you never rejoices to return to his mother's womb once again." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Amr Ibn Dinar).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Verily, the example of a faithful believer in this world is like a fetus in its mother's womb: Whenever it comes out of her womb as a newborn child , it weeps for its exit until when it sees the light and is placed on the bed, it never likes to return to its first place once again." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya on the authority of Sulaim Ibn Amir Al-Jana'izi). Similarly, the faithful believer is scared by death until when he comes to his Lord Almighty, he never likes to return to this world once again, just as a child never likes to return to its mother's womb once again.

It is reported that it was said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "So and so died." On that he said: "He has been relieved (of this world if he is good), otherwise (people have been) relieved of him (i.e. of his evil)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Qatadah). By the relieved one he referred to the faithful believer, and by such as of whom people are relieved to the wicked.

It is reported on the authority of Abu Umar, the lord of Suqya that he said: Once, Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" came upon us while we were still boys and looked at a grave and behold! He saw a protuberant skull thereupon he ordered a man to cover it with dust. Then he said: "No doubt, those dead bodies are not harmed by dust: it is the souls which receive punishment and reward until the Day of Judgement."

It is reported on the authority of Amr Ibn Dinar that he said: "No dead dies but that eh knows what happens among his family after his death, and while they are washing and shrouding him, he looks at them."

According to Malik Ibn Anas: "I was reported that the souls of the faithful believers are free, and they go wherever they like."

It is reported on the authority of An-Nu'man Ibn Bashir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" having said while being on the pulpit: "No doubt, nothing remains of this world but as little as is equal to flies hovering in its air. So, please, (observe the commandments of) Allah! (Observe the commandments of) Allah concerning your brothers from among the inhabitants of the graves, for your deeds are shown to them." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"

said: "Put not your dead to shame by your misdeeds, for your deeds are shown to your allies from among the inhabitants of the graves." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya; and Ahmad on the authority of Anas with a slight change of wording).

For this reason, Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" said (by way of supplication): "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from doing a deed therewith to put myself to shame with Abdullah Ibn Rawahah." Abdullah Ibn Rawahah "Allah be pleased with him", his maternal uncle, had died when he said so.

Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-As "Allah be pleased with him" was asked about the souls of the faithful believers: where they are after death, thereupon he said: "Inside white birds under the shade of the Throne (of Majesty), whereas the souls of the disbelievers in the seventh earth."

It is reported on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" having said: "Indeed, the dead knows who washes (and shrouds) his body, who carries him (on the bier), and who places him in his grave." (Ahmad).

According to Salih Al-Murri: "I was reported that the souls meet together at death and say to that which comes out to them: "What was your residence? In which of both bodies were you? Were you in a good or in a wicked body?"

According to Ubaid Ibn Umair: "The inhabitants of the graves expect for the news from this world. When the soul of a new deceased comes to them, they ask: "What has so and so done?" He says: "Has he not come to you?" they say: "Then, we all are to Allah and to Him we shall return. Of a surety, he has been taken to a way different from ours."

According to Ja'far Ibn Sa'id: "If one dies, his deceased child receives him in the same way as an absent is received."

According to Mujahid: "A man in his grave is given the glad tidings of his child's righteousness ."

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "When the believer's soul is taken up, these of mercy receive it from Allah just as a giver of glad tidings is received in this world. They say: "Give respite to your brother until he takes rest, for he was indeed in severe distress." Then they ask him: "What has so and so of men done? What has so and so of women done? Has she got married?" If they ask him about a man who died before him, and he told them that he had died before him, they say to him: "We all are to Allah and to Him we shall return. He has been taken to his home in a (bottomless) Pit." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and At-Tabarani).

Explication Of The Grave's Speech To The Dead, And The Dead's Speech, Either In Word Or In State, Which Is More Expressive To Reach The Dead Than The Word To The Living

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The grave says to the dead once his body is placed in it: 'Woe to you son of Adam! What has deceived you about me? Do you not know that I am the house of darkness, affliction, loneliness and insects and larva? What has deceived you about me when you passed by me hesitantly?' if he is a righteous man the

answerer of the grave then would say on his behalf: 'Tell me what to do if he used to enjoin right and forbid evil?' the grave then says: "In this case, I turn into greenery on him.' Then, his body turns into light, and his soul ascends to Allah Almighty." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya, At-Tabarani and Al-Hakim on the authority of Abu Al-Hajjaj At-Tamali).

According to Ubaid Ibn Umair Al-Laithi: "No dead dies but that the hole in which he is buried calls him: "I am the house of insects, darkness and loneliness. If you were obedient to Allah in your life, now, I would be a source of mercy for you; and if you were disobedient to Him, now, I would be a means of punishment against you. Whoever enters me as obedient, would come out as happy and pleased, and whoever enters me as disobedient would come out as displeased and ruined."

According to Ka'b "Allah be pleased with him": "If the dead is placed in the grave, he is surrounded by his righteous deeds of prayer, fasting, , Hajj, Jihad and charity. When the angels of punishment come to him from his feet, the prayer says to them: "Leave him, for you have no way over him. He indeed used to offer long standing on them in prayer for Allah Almighty." Then, they come to him from his head, thereupon fasting says: "You have no way over him. He used to spend his day in long thirsty as fasting for Allah Almighty in this world. So, you have no way over him." When they come to him from his body, both Hajj and Jihad say: "Leave him for he troubled himself and consumed his power in Hajj and Jihad in the Way of Allah Almighty. So, you have no way over him." When they come to him from his hands, the charity says: "Leave my lord! How many an object of charity that came out through those hands until it fell into the Hand of Allah Almighty, seeking His Countenance. So, you have no way over him." Then, it is said to him: "Blessed be you! Let you be good as living and good as dead." Then, the angels of mercy come and spread his grave with a bed and a wrapper from Paradise, and his grave extends on him as far as his sight could reach, and a chandelier from Paradise is brought to him which illuminates his grave until he is raised by Allah Almighty from his grave."

Abdullah Ibn Ubaid Ibn Umair said while he was in a funeral procession: I was reported that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The deceased sits while hearing the footsteps of those who escort him to his final place, and nothing talks to him but his grave saying: "Woe to you son of Adam! Have you not been warned of me and of my narrowness, stink, terrors and worms? Then, what have you prepared for me?" (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Ibn Al-Mubarak).

Explication Of Punishment Of Grave; And Interrogation Of Munkar And Nakir.

It is narrated on the authority of Al-Bara' Ibn Azib "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: Once, we set out in the company of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" to attend the funeral procession of a man from amongst the Ansar, and when we arrived at the grave, the ditch had not been dug yet. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon

him" sat down and we sat around him (as motionless and silent) as if there were birds above our heads. In his hand, there was a stick, with which he was scratching the ground. Then he raised his head (towards the sky) and said: "Seek refuge with Allah from the punishment of the grave!" he said it twice or thrice. Then he said: "When a believing servant dies (and is buried), Allah Almighty would send angels whose faces are as bright as the sun, having his shroud and perfume. They sit as far from him as his sight could reach, and when his soul comes out, all the angels in the heavens and the earth invoke blessing on him, and the gates of the heavens would be opened to him, and all of them like to receive him. If his soul is carried to ascend, it would be said: "O Lord! That is Your servant so and so." He would say: "Return him and show to him the honor that I have prepared for him. I have indeed promised him: From it (the earth) We created you, and to it We shall return you, and from it We shall raise you once again." He indeed hears their footsteps when they turn away from him. Then, two angels will come to him, and make him sit down and ask him: "Who is your Lord?" he will say: "My Lord is Allah." They will ask: "What is your religion?" He will say: "My religion is Islam." They will say: "What about this man who was sent unto you (as a Messenger)?" He will say: "He is the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"." They will ask him: "How have you come to know that?" He will say: "I recited Allah's Book (of Qur'an), in which I believed and trusted." This is the confirmation of Allah's statement: "Allah will establish in strength those who believe, with the Word that stands firm, in this world and in the Hereafter." (Abraham 27)

﴿ يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

Then, a Caller from the heaven will call: "My servant has told the truth. Make his bed from the (beds of the) Garden, dress him from the (dresses of the) Garden, and open to him a gate leading to the Garden." Then, there will come to him from its good odor and sweetness (as much as he pleases), and his grave will grow spacious for him (as far) as his sight could reach.

On the other hand, if the unbelieving servant dies and is buried, stern hardy angels would descend to him having dresses of fire and trousers from tar. When his soul comes out, he would be cursed by all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, and all the gates of the heavens would be closed against him. When his soul is carried to ascend, it would be discarded, and it would be said: "O Lord! Your servant so and so is rejected by all the heavens and the earth." Allah Almighty would say: "Return him and show to him the evil that I have prepared for him. I have indeed promised him: From it (the earth) We created you, and to it We shall return you, and from it We shall raise you once again." He indeed hears their footsteps when they turn away from him. Then, his soul will be returned to his body (in the grave), where two angels will come and make him sit and ask him: "Who is your Lord?" He will say: "Ha! Ha!! Ha! I do not know." They will ask him: "What is your religion?" He will say: "Ha! Ha! I do not know." They will ask him: "What about the man who was sent unto you (as a Messenger)?" he will say: "Ha! Ha! I do not know." Then, a caller from the

heaven will call: "He has told a lie! Make his bed from (the beds of) the fire (of Hell), and open for him a gate leading to the fire (of Hell)." He will suffer its scorching heat and his grave will be tightened unto him so much that his ribs will be displaced. "Then, a blind, deaf, dumb person will be assigned to him (the unbeliever), having a sledgehammer in his hand, and (it is so much heavy that) if a mountain is struck with it, it will turn into dust. He will strike him (the unbeliever) with it and he will turn into dust. But Allah Almighty will bring him to life once again, and (such a blind) man will give him a further strike as a result of which he will cry (so much loudly) that all barring men and jinn will hear it." (Abu Dawud and Al-Hakim).

According to Muhammad Ibn Ali: "No dead dies but that at death his good deeds and misdeeds are embodied to him, thereupon he devotes himself to his good deeds and turns his back to the misdeeds."

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "When the believer comes to his last breaths, angels come to him with a piece of silk having musk and bouquets of basil, and his soul is taken smoothly as a hair is taken stealthily from the dough. Then, it is said to it: "O (you) soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction! Come back you to your Lord, well pleased (yourself), and well-pleasing unto Him: Come out to the rest and satisfaction of Allah Almighty, and the honor that is prepared and kept by Him for you." Once his soul is taken out, it is placed on that musk and basil and folded up in the piece of silk, and then sent up to Illiyyin. But when death approaches a disbeliever, angels come to him with a rough cloth of coarse wool having a piece of fire. His soul then is pulled out forcefully and it said to it: "O wicked soul! Come out as displeased (yourself) and displeasing (to your Lord): come out to the humiliation and punishment prepared for you by Allah Almighty." Once his soul is taken out, it is placed on that piece of fire, and folded up with the rough cloth of coarse wool, and then sent to Sijjin." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Ibn Hibban).

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The believer in his grave is in a green garden: his grave is made spacious upon him as much as seventy cubits, and it illuminates for him like the moon on the night when it is full. Do you know in which context the following statement of Allah was revealed? "But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment." (Ta Ha 124)

﴿ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِى فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَعْمَىٰ ﴿١٢٤﴾ ﴾

They said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." On that he said: "It was revealed in connection with the disbeliever's punishment in his grave: Ninety nine female dragons are vested with authority over him. Do you know what a female dragon here is? It is a nine-head serpent: they continue to lacerate, lick and blow poison into his body until the day they would be raised." (Ibn Hibban).

The number of those serpents is in proportion to the number of bad manners and blameworthy attributes, and of course, they differ in strength and weakness by the difference of those characteristics. Those serpents, in this concept, are themselves the destructive attributes (referred to in the third quarter of that book), which turn into such serpents and scorpions one finds in the grave. The masters of hearts witness, by the light of insight, those destructives. Those narrations have mysteries and secrets, although, in the sight of the masters of hearts and insights, are evident and clear. But as for him to whom their realities are not revealed, he should not deny them entirely. Faith, at the least, is to give trust and submit to that fact.

You may say: "we see the disbeliever in his grave for a long time and do not see along with him such serpents and scorpions: then, how should we give trust to that which contradicts our vision?".

In reply to that, it should be known to you that you have three degrees of trust in this issue:

One of them, which is the most evident and the most authentic, is to believe that there are really serpents and scorpions that bite the wicked dead in the grave, but you do not see them. That is because this eye is not qualified to see what belongs to the dominion of the invisibles; and all that pertains to the hereafter belongs to the dominion of the invisibles. Do you not see how the companions "Allah be pleased with them" believed in the descent of Gabriel (with the Divine revelation) and although they never saw him, they believed that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saw him? Anyway, the serpents and scorpions that bite the dead in the grave do not belong to our world of visibles, which means that they are imperceptible by the same senses of perception unique to our world. They are perceived by another sense (which we do not have in this world of ours).

The second is to remember the sleeping person who might see in his dreams a serpent biting him, for which he feels pain, to the extent that he might be disturbed and his forehead sweat during his sleep. But even, as for you, you see him motionless and still, and do not see any serpents or scorpions to bite him. Although he sees the serpent and suffers the pain of biting, you neither see nor suffer anything.

The third is to know that it is not the serpent itself that pains you, but what pains you is only the poison you receive from it. pain also does not lie in the poison, but your torture results from its trace on your body. If that trace afflicts you without the perception of poison, it would realize although too difficult to recognize unless it is attributed to the cause that leads to it. If the pleasure of sexual relation is created within a man who has not experienced nor perceived its image, then, it would be too difficult to recognize unless it is ascribed to the cause that leads to it in practice. In this way, the effect of the cause realizes without the perception of the cause itself, which is intended for its effect and not for itself. Those destructive attributes turn into harmful and painful things at death, and their pains become like those of serpents and scorpions although there are no serpents nor scorpions.

That the bad attribute turns into a harmful thing is like the state in which the love turns into pain when the beloved dies. In this way, the pleasure of love becomes painful, to the extent that one wishes he has never tasted that pleasure at all. That, namely, is a kind of punishment which a dead receives in the grave. When he is in the world, he is possessed by the love for worldly benefits. If all of this is taken from him even in his life and it becomes impossible for him to restore it once again, what do you think his state of destructive grief and sorrow might be? Would he not be more wretched, distressed and anxious? Would he not wish he has never had anything of what was taken from him?

Similarly, death is to leave the worldly benefits all at once, what do you think his sadness and misery might be? Besides that misery, he regrets for the bliss of the hereafter which he has lost due to his greediness for the world, and his being veiled from the light of Allah Almighty. That is the very punishment therewith he is punished, for nothing follows the fire of departure other than the fire of Hell as confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: "Verily, from (the Light of) their Lord, that Day, will they be veiled. Further, they will enter the Fire of Hell." (Al-Mutaffiffin 15-16)

﴿ كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ۝ ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا۟ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ۝ ﴾

On the contrary is the one who is not affable with this world, nor loves but Allah Almighty, and has a great longing for meeting Him: By death, he has indeed got rid of the prison of this world and suffering of desires and pleasures therein, and devoted himself wholeheartedly to his beloved, after all worldly obstacles and hindrances had been removed from his way, and only the bliss has become ahead of him, which is guaranteed to be never-ending: It is for the like of this that the workers should work.

The point is that a man loves his female horse to the extent that if he is given the freedom to choose to be deprived of it or bitten by a scorpion, of course, he would prefer to be bitten. Thus, the pain he receives from the loss of his female horse is more severe on him than that he receives from the bite of the scorpion; and it is his love for the female horse that indeed bites him: if it is taken from him, let him then get ready for those bites. That is because death takes from him all his things he possesses and loves in this world: if he loves them only, and they have been taken from him by death, then, his pain for losing them would be more severe on him than the bite of scorpions and serpents he might receive.

As well as if those things are taken from him while he is still living, his pain for that would be so much great, the same is true when he is dead. We have already shown that the essence which perceives and senses pains and pleasures never dies by the death of the body: On the contrary, his punishment after death is more severe, because during life, he amuses himself with things that occupy his senses, consoles himself with the hope of restoring his lost things, or the hope of compensation for it, whereas after death, there is no amusement nor consolation. Henceforth, everything, say a shirt or a handkerchief, or any such like, he loves in this world so much that it would be difficult on him to lose it, he remains regretful for it and is punished because of it. If he leaves this world and he is free from its things, he would be safe, unlike him who leaves it while fastened by its

things. As well as the grief of the one from whom only a Dinar is stolen is less than him from whom ten Dinars are stolen, similarly, the owner of a single Dirham is better in state than the owner of two Dirhams. To that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred by his statement: "The owner of a single Dirham would receive reckoning easier than the owner of two Dirhams."

There is nothing in this world that you leave behind at death but that it becomes a source of grief upon you after death. So, get more thereof if you so like, or little thereof if you so like. If you get more, you indeed increase your grief, and if you get little, you indeed reduce your grief. That is why the serpents and scorpions are numerous in the graves of the rich and wealthy, who love the life of this world and prefer it to the hereafter.

Those are the three degrees of faith concerning the serpents and scorpions, and all kinds of punishment of the grave.

Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" saw in his dream a son of him who died and he said to him: "O my son! Admonish me." he said: "Do not oppose Allah Almighty in what He wills." He said: "O my son! Give me more." He said: "O my father! You would not endure it." he said: "No, say." He said: "Do not make a shirt between you and Allah Almighty." Henceforth, he never put on a shirt for thirty years.

If you ask me about the most valid of those three degrees of faith, let me tell you that the people are different in their inclination to and disinclination from any of them; and the truth in which there is no doubt is that all of them are possible to realize; and to reject any of them goes back to ignorance of the extensive power and will of Allah Almighty. As those three ways of punishment in the grave are possible, then, to give trust to them all is obligatory. A servant might be punished by only one and another by all the three together: we seek refuge with Allah from the punishment of Allah.

On the other hand, one should give trust to that by way of imitation, since verification here is impossible. What I advise you to do in this respect is not to engage yourself so much about the details of that, nor in the knowledge of it: But you'd rather engage in how to avert from yourself the punishment in general, whatever it might be. It is learnt that after death, a servant should be either in painful punishment or in enduring bliss; and it is for the like of this that he should get ready. But to search for the details of punishment and reward is indeed to waste time in what is useless.

Explication Of Interrogation Of Munkar And Nakir And Their Image; And Embracing Of The Grave

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If a servant dies, two black and blue-complexioned angels would come to him, one called Munkar and the other Nakir, and ask him: "What did you say about the Prophet?" if he is a faithful believer, he would say: "He is the servant and Messenger of Allah. I testify that there is none worthy of worship except for Allah, and that Muhammad "peace be upon him" is the Messenger of Allah."

They then would say to him: "We have indeed learnt that you said (and believed in) that." Then, his grave would be extended for him as much as seventy in seventy cubits, and illuminated and he would be asked to sleep. But he would say: "Let me return to my family to tell them (about my bliss)." But he would be asked to sleep and he really sleeps like a bridegroom whom nothing awakens but the dearest of his family to him, until Allah Almighty raises him from his lying place.

But if he, on the other hand, is a hypocrite, he would say in reply to them: "I do not know. I heard the people saying something and I repeated it after them." They would say to him: "We have indeed learnt that you said (and believed in) that." Then, the earth would be asked to be welded on him, and it would do accordingly so violently that his ribs would dislocate; and he would remain in punishment until Allah Almighty raises him from his lying place." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibban).

It is further reported on the authority of Ata' Ibn Yasar that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said to Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him": "O Umar! What do you do if you die and your people go and dig a hole three cubits long and a cubit and a span wide, and then return to wash your body, shroud and embalm you and then carry your dead body on the bier until they place you in the grave, and then fill it with dust over you and bury you; and once they turn away from you, the two grave tempters come to you, i.e. Munkar and Nakir, whose voice is like loud thunder, and sight like swift lightning, dragging their hair and digging the grave with their canine teeth, and then shake and move you violently? What do you do in that very state O Umar?" Umar said: "Would I have the same mind as I have now?" He said: "Yes." Umar said: "Then, I would suffice you against them." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Al-Baihaqi).

That is a clear statement that mind never changes by death. What changes is only the body and the organs and parts of body. This means that the dead continues to preserve his perception, sense of pains and pleasures. By the perceiving mind, I do not mean that very physical organ, but I mean that internal essence that has no definite place nor form in the body. It is that which is indivisible in itself. If all the parts of the body scatter about on earth, and nothing remains but the perceiving indivisible part, the rational man then remains standing. He continues to be as such after death.

According to Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir: "I was reported that concerning the disbeliever, a blind deaf animal is invested with authority over him in his grave, having a headed lash of iron in its hand, therewith it persists in striking him until the Day of Judgement: It neither sees him in order to avoid him, nor hears his voice in order to be merciful towards him."

It is reported on the authority of Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We were in the company of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in a funeral procession when he sat at the head of the grave, looked at it and then said: "The believer is pressed violently in that (grave) so much violently that his sides dislocate from him." (Ahmad).

It is reported on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, the grave has a violent embracing (of the dead body), and were anyone to be saved from it, surely, Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh would have been saved from it." (Ahmad).

It is further narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: Zainab "Allah be pleased with her" the daughter of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" died, and she was sick. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" attended her funeral procession, and his state of anxiety aggrieved us. When we reached the grave and he entered it, the colour of his face turned yellow. But when he came out of it, he was cheerful. We said: "O Messenger of Allah! We have seen your state (that aggrieved us): What is the reason for that?" he said: "I remembered the earth's violent embracing of my daughter, and the severe punishment of the grave, thereupon I was told that Allah Almighty alleviated the severity from her, and that she received an embracing so violent that its voice was audible to all that is living in between the heavens and the earth." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya).

CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT IS KNOWN FROM THE STATES OF THE DEAD BY MEANS OF REVELATION IN DREAMS

It should be known to you that we know, by the lights of insight obtained from the Book of Allah Almighty, and the sunnah of His Messenger "peace be upon him", along with the different methods and ways of consideration show to us the states of the dead in general, and their division into happy and wretched. But as for the state of a particular person, it could not be revealed in principle. If we rely on the apparent faith and rectitude of a particular person, it should be known then that piety lies in the heart, and we do not know in which state does anyone whom we know really dies. That is because it is abstruse and hidden even from the man himself, then, how would it be for anyone else? There is no judgement to be built only on the apparent righteousness without the internal piety. Allah Almighty says: "Allah does accept only from those who are righteous." (Al-Ma'idah 27)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

Once the dead moves from the world of the visibles into the dominion of the invisibles, his state then could not be seen by the human ordinary eye, but by another eye that is created in the heart of everyone, but covered with a thick veil of his desires and lusts, along with his worldly occupations, to the extent that he no longer sees or is imagined to see by it anything of the dominion of the invisibles unless that veil is removed from the eye of his heart.

But since that veil was removed from the hearts of the Prophets "peace be upon them" they were able to see the dominion of the invisibles and witnessed its wonders, and the dead in it. When they witnessed that, they told about it.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saw the grave embracing of his daughter Zainab "Allah be pleased with her"

and of Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh, and saw the state of the father of Jabir "Allah be pleased with them" when he was martyred on the battle of Uhud, and told him (Jabir) that Allah Almighty made him sit in front of Him with no partition between them, and so on. But such witnesses are not available to anyone other than the Prophets and Messengers "peace be upon them", and the allies and friends of Allah whose degree is close to theirs. What is available to the like of us is another weak witness, though Prophetic, i.e. the vision, since the true vision is a part of many parts of Prophethood.

In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The good vision (one sees in a dream) is one of forty-six parts of Prophethood."

But that revelation also requires the removal of the veil from the eye of the heart. For this reason, it is only the righteous faithful man whose vision is reliable. That is why the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" commanded to get purified and perform ablution on going to bed, in order for one to sleep as pure and clean. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Al-Bara'). It is a reference to the purification of the inside, which is the origin, whereas the purification of the appearance supplementary.

Once the inside of a man becomes pure and clean, it is revealed, in the eye of the heart, what would come to be in the future, just as the conquest of Mecca was revealed to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in his dream, as confirmed by the following statement which was later revealed by Allah Almighty: "Truly did Allah fulfill the vision for His Messenger: You shall enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah wills, with minds secure, heads shaved, hair cut short, and without fear. For He knew what you knew not, and He granted, besides this, a speedy victory." (Al-Fath 27)

﴿ لَقَدْ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ ٱلرُّءْيَا بِٱلْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلُنَّ ٱلْمَسْجِدَ ٱلْحَرَامَ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ
وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا۟ فَجَعَلَ مِن دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

(Ibn Abu Hatim in his Tafsir on the authority of Mujahid).

The vision and knowledge of the unseen in dreams are among the wonders and mysteries of the making of Allah Almighty, and the clearest evidences for the existence of the dominion of the invisibles. But even, the mysteries of visions and dreams are more relevant to the science of Revelation (Mukashafah) apart from the science of practical religion (Mu'amalah). It is unfitting for us to talk about it here. What is allowed by the context is to give you an example to make it understandable to you.

The heart is like a mirror on which images and pictures are reflected. All that has been preordained and decreed by Allah from the beginning until the end of creation is recorded in something created by Allah Almighty, referred to once as the Preserved Tablet, once as the Evident Book, and once as the Clear Guide. Although all of this is inscribed on that thing, it is beyond the capacity of the eye to see it. Think not that this Tablet is made of wood, iron, bone, or so, or that the Book of papers or so: On the contrary, you should understand that the Tablet of Allah does not resemble any tablet, and the Book of Allah is not similar to any

book of the creatures, in the same way as His Essence and attributes are not like the essence and attributes of His creatures.

If you like an illustrative example, you should learn that the inscription of the decrees and fates on the Tablet is like the inscription of the words of the Holy Qur'an on the minds of those who memorize it by heart: they are lined in the mind in such a way as whenever he recites it, it seems to him as if he sees it with his eye, although if you inspect his mind, you would find no letter thereof.

The Tablet is like a mirror on which the realities of all things created are reflected. If another mirror is placed opposite to it, the images of those realities might be reflected on it too, unless there is a partition between both. Thus, the heart is a mirror on which the image of knowledge is reflected, whereas the Tablet is a mirror on which the realities of the whole knowledge are reflected. The engagement of the heart with its sensual desires and lusts stands as a partition between it and the Tablet that belongs to the dominion of the invisibles. If some wind blows and removes a part of that partition from the heart, something of the dominion of the invisibles might appear in its mirror, like the swift lightning, which is apt either to continue for some time or to vanish quickly, and that is more frequent.

During wakefulness, it is always engaged in what it receives from the senses of the occupations that belong to the world of visibles, which stands, to be sure, as a partition that veils it from the dominion of the invisibles. In sleep, the senses close on that world, and cease to bring anything to the heart; and once the heart gets rid of it along with imagination, , and is pure in its essence, the partition that is between it and the Preserved Tablet is raised, allowing for something of what it contains to be reflected on it, just as the image is reflected from a certain mirror on another mirror opposite to it so long as there is no partition between them.

But sleep prevents only the five senses to work, and not the imagination. For this reason, what is reflected on the heart from the other mirror becomes subject to the imagination which imitates it with a similar picture. Such being the case, the imagined pictures made by imagination is more enduring in the memory than the real images. So, when one awakes, he remembers nothing other than the fancies. The interpreter of dreams then needs to see to which of the real images such and such a fancy goes back, depending on the relevance that is between both. This work is evident and well known to those involved in interpretation of dreams.

It suffices you for example that a man said to Ibn Sirin: "I saw in a dream as if I had a seal in my hand therewith I seal the mouths of men and the genitals of women." In his interpretation of it, he said to him: "You are a Mu'adhdhin who proclaim Adhan before Morning prayer in the month of Ramadan." The man said to him: "You have told the truth." Consider here that the essence of sealing is prevention for which it is intended. The state of a certain person is revealed to the heart from the Preserved Tablet, as it is, i.e. that he prevents the people from food and drink. But imagination related the prevention in sealing with the seal, and represented it with the imagined picture that implies the essence of the meaning; and it is only that imagined picture that endures in the memory after

getting up from sleep.

That is a brief synopsis of the vision. But even, what do you think it to be compared with death itself therewith the veils are penetrated and the world of the unseen revealed? The sleep is a simple example of death, and at death, the realities of things are uncovered to the sight after veils are removed as confirmed by Allah Almighty in His statement: "You was heedless of this, now have We removed your veil, and sharp is your sight this Day!" (Qaf 22)

﴿ لَّقَدْ كُنتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَٰذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ ﴾

And: "Is this then a fake, or is it you that do not see? Burn you therein: The same is it to you whether you bear it with patience, or not: You but receive the recompense of your (own) deeds." (At-Tur 15-16)

﴿ أَفَسِحْرٌ هَٰذَا أَمْ أَنتُمْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ۝ اصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوا أَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

To those Allah Almighty refers in His statement: "but something will confront them from Allah, which they could never have counted upon!" (Az-Zumar 47)

﴿ لَهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ ﴾

Wonder at us and we are fronted with all those wonders and marvels from Allah Almighty, of which we are heedless, and rather engaged in our worldly benefits, pleasures and delights, although we are going to inevitably leave it entirely. But where is he from among us to whom the Holy Spirit might say the same as he said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "Love whomever you like for you would inevitably leave him, and live as you like, for you would necessarily die, and work as you please, for you would be rewarded for it." No doubt, when this fact was revealed to him by the certainty of faith, he was like a wayfarer in this world: He neither placed a rick over another, nor a pipe over another (in building), nor left a Dinar nor a Dirham after him, nor took a beloved, nor an intimate friend. It is true that he "peace be upon him" said: "Were I to take an intimate friend, I would have taken Abu Bakr as my intimate friend, but your companion (i.e. himself) is the intimate of (Allah) the Most Gracious." He thus showed that the intimate friendship with Allah, the Most Gracious filled his heart and left in it no place for any other relation.

He further said to his Ummah (as commanded by Allah to tell them): "If you do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Al Imran 31)

﴿ قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾

His Ummah consists of those who follow him, and none follows him but such as turns away from this world with its benefits and delights, and rather devotes himself wholeheartedly to the hereafter. He never called but to Allah and the Last Day, nor diverted but from the world and its transitory fortunes. As much as you turn away from this world and devote yourself to the hereafter, you then follow his way; and as much as you follow his way, you imitate him; and as

much as you imitate him, you then become a member of his Ummah, and vice versa: as much as you devote yourself to this world and turn away from the hereafter, you deviate from his way, and does not imitate him, and rather join those in whom Allah Almighty said: "Then, for such as had transgressed all bounds, And had preferred the life of this world, the Abode will be Hell-Fire." (An-Nazi'at 37-39)

﴿ فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴾

And: "Shall We then treat the People of Faith like the People of Sin? What is the matter with you? How judge you?" (Al-Qalam 35-36)

﴿ أَفَنَجْعَلُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ كَٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝ مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ﴾

Now let's return to our topic, i.e. the role of vision in revealing the states of the dead in their graves. Indeed, Prophethood was over, and nothing remained thereof but the news givers, i.e. the visions. Now, we are going to make a mention of some visions that reveal the states of the dead.

Explication Of Visions That Uncover The States Of The Dead And The Deeds That Benefit In The Hereafter

A mention may be made here of the vision of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" who said: "Whoever sees me in his dream has really seen me, for Satan could not seem in my form." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" said: I saw the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in a dream and he did not look at me. I asked him: "O Messenger of Allah! What is wrong with me?" He "peace be upon him" turned to me and said: "Are you not the one who kissed (your wife) while you were fasting?" He then said: "By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, I would never kiss any woman while I am fasting."

Al-Abbas "Allah be pleased with him" said: I wished to see Umar Ibn Al-Khattab in my dream (after his death), and I saw him just at the end of the year. I saw him wiping sweat off his forehead and saying: "It is time for my finishing (from reckoning). My throne was about to be ruined had I not found Him (Allah) Most Kind, Oft-Merciful."

Al-Hassan Ibn Ali "Allah be pleased with them" said: Ali said to me: Tonight, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" appeared to me in a dream and I said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! I have received from your Ummah such and such (trouble)." He said to me: "Then, invoke evil upon them." I said: "O Allah! Recompense me with people better for me than they, and recompense them with one worse for them than I." He then came out in the morning following that night and Ibn Miljam struck him.

An old man said: I saw the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in a dream and said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! Pray forgiveness for me." But he turned away from me. I said to him: "O Messenger of Allah! It is reported to us from Sufyan Ibn Uyainah from Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir from Jabir Ibn Abdullah "Allah be pleased with them" that you never said no

about anything you were asked." On that he turned his face to me and said: "May Allah forgive for you." (Muslim).

It is reported on the authority of Al-Abbas Ibn Abd-Al-Muttalib "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: Abu Lahab is my brother. When he died and Allah Almighty told about him what He had told, I grieved for him, and his matter concerned me so much. I kept asking Allah Almighty for a year to let me see him in a dream. Then, I saw him in flames. I asked him about his state and he told me: "I was led to punishment in the fire, which is not alleviated from me except on the night of every Monday." I asked him about the reason for that and he said: "On that night, Muhammad "peace be upon him" was born, and Umaimah came and gave me the glad tidings of his birth, thereupon, out of my joyfulness and cheerfulness of him, I emancipated a slave-girl belonging to me. Allah then rewarded me for that by alleviating from me the punishment on the night of every Monday."

Abd-Al-Wahid Ibn Zaid said: I set out as a pilgrim in the company of an old man who used not to do anything but that he would invoke prayer upon the Prophet "peace be upon him". I asked him about that and he said: "Let me tell you about the reason for that. I set out to Mecca in the company of my father and when we went to spend the night in a certain place, I fell asleep. While I was sleeping, somebody came to me (in a dream) and said to me: "Get up: Allah has caused your father to die and blackened his face." I got up as scared and removed the dress from the face of my father and behold! He was dead with his face black. I was frightened because of that. Being in such anxiety, slumber overtook me and while I was sleeping I saw (in a dream) by the head of my father four black men having pillars of iron. Then, a good-looking man putting on two green garments came and asked them to move away, and then wiped his face with his hand. Then he came to me and said: "Get up, for Allah has whitened the face of your father." I asked him: "Who are you, let my father and mother be sacrificed for you?" he said: "I am Muhammad." Then, I got up and removed the dress from the face of my father and behold! It was white. From that time on, I have never left invoking prayer upon the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"."

Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz said: I saw the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and Abu Bakr and Umar "Allah be pleased with them" were sitting with him. I greeted them with peace and sat with them. Then, while I was sitting, both Ali and Mu'awiyah were brought and admitted to a house and the door was closed on them. Very soon, Ali "Allah be pleased with him" came out saying: "He gave his judgement in my favor, by the Lord of the Ka'bah." A short while later, Mu'awiyah came out saying: "He has pardoned me, by the Lord of the Ka'bah.""

One day, Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" got up from his sleep and said: "We all belong to Allah, and to Him we shall return. Al-Hussain has been killed." That was before his killing. But his companions disapproved that statement from him. On that he said: "I saw (in a dream) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" having a bottle of blood and said to me: "Do you not know what those of my Ummah have done after me?

They killed my son Al-Hussain, and that is his blood and the blood of his companions (who were killed with him), and I raise it to Allah Almighty." Twenty-four days later, the news reached that Al-Hussain was killed on the very day he (Ibn Abbas) saw him.

Abu Ja'far As-Saidalani said: I saw the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in a dream surrounded by a group of poor persons. While we were as such, the sky split open and two angels descended, one having a tube and the other a jug. The tube was placed in front of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and he washed his hand from it. then, he ordered that his companions should wash theirs. Then, the tube was placed in front of me and one of them (the angels) said to the other: "Do not pour water over his hand, for he does not belong to them." I said: "O Messenger of Allah! Is it not reported from you that you said: 'The man would be gathered in the company of whomever he loves'?" He answered in the affirmative, thereupon I said: "O Messenger of Allah! I then love you and love those poor persons." On that he "peace be upon him" said (to the angel): "Pour water over his hand, for he belongs to them."

Once Mujammi was seen in a dream and asked: "How have you seen the matter?" He said: "I have seen that the abstinent from this world have taken away (apart from the rich and wealthy) the good of the world and the hereafter."

According to Muhammad Ibn Wasi': "The vision pleases and deceives not the faithful believer."

Zurarah Ibn Abu Awfa was asked in a dream: "Which deed is the best with you?" he said: "Both contentment and short hope."

According to Sufyan Ibn Uyainah: I saw my brother in a dream and asked him: "What has Allah Almighty done with you?" He said: "He forgave for me every sin I asked Him to forgive it for me, and did not forgive for me any sin I did not ask Him to forgive it for me."

According to Ali At-Talhi: I saw in a dream a woman that does not resemble the women of this world. I asked her: "Who are you?" She said: "A houri." I said to her: "I like to marry you." She said: "Demand my hand first from my master, and then give my dower." I asked her: "What is your dower?" she said: "To prevent the self from its evils."

According to Al-Kittani: I saw Al-Junaid in a dream and asked him: "What has Allah Almighty done with you?" He said: "All those euphoric words and short phrases vanished, and we got only the reward of two rak'ahs we used to pray at night."

Zubaidah (the wife of Haron Ar-Rashid) was seen in a dream and asked: "What has Allah done with you?" She said: "He has forgiven for me by virtue of those four expressions: 'There is none worthy of worship except for Allah, therewith I consume my lifetime; There is none worthy of worship except for Allah, therewith I enter my grave; There is none worthy of worship except for Allah, therewith I become in seclusion; There is none worthy of worship except for Allah, therewith I meet my Lord Almighty.'"

Part two:

STATES OF THE DEAD FROM THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPET TO THE ABIDANCE EITHER IN PARADISE OR IN HELL; AND ITS RELATED TERRORS AND RISKS

It contains the following chapters:

Explication of the sounding of the trumpet
Account of the mustering land and its inhabitants
Account of the duration of the Day of Resurrection
Account of the Day of Judgement, its terrors and names
Account of interrogation about sins
Account of the balance of deeds
Account of foes and opponents
Account of Sirat (bridge held over Hell)
Account of intercession
Account of the Fountain
Account of Hell, its denizens, terrors, chains, and serpents
Account of Paradise, its bliss, number of its gardens, gates, mansions, walls, rivers, trees, clothes and thrones of its inhabitants
Account of houris and youth
Account of looking at the Countenance of Allah Almighty
A chapter on the extensive mercy of Allah Almighty, therewith the book is concluded, Allah willing

CHAPTER ONE

EXPLICATION OF THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPET

You have already learnt the great terrors and risks a dead receives after death. But the greatest and the most severe of them all is the sounding of the trumpet, resurrection on the Day of Judgement, presentation before the Lord Almighty for reckoning, questioning about deeds, be they significant or insignificant, the establishment of the balance of deeds, crossing the path that is held over the Hell, and expectation for the call when cases are decided, either for happiness or for wretchedness. You have to know all of those states, and have faith in them entirely, and engage in long meditation in them in order to stimulate within your heart the necessary motives to get ready for them.

But unfortunately, most people do not have faith in the Last Day from the depth of their hearts. That is confirmed evidently by their seriousness in getting ready for the hot summer and cold winter, and negligence of the scorching heat of Hell, along with the related difficulties and terrors. More amazing, if they are asked about the Last Day, they would talk about it only with their tongue, while their hearts remain heedless of it. However, to belie a thing with the deed is more effective than to belie it with the tongue.

In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: Allah Almighty says: "The son of Adam abuses Me, and it is not fitting for him to abuse Me; and he further belies Me, and it is not fitting for

him to belie Me at all. As for his abuse, it is his statement that I have a child. As for his belying, it is his statement that I would not recreate him once again as I created him at first." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

However, man's weak faith and absence of certainty in the Last day and resurrection goes back to his lack of understanding of those things that are beyond the reach of his mind on the one hand, and inability to imagine that such a thing would come on the other hand. If man does not witness with his own eye how animals are born from each other in a reproductive operation and, at the same time, it is said to him that from a sperm-drop a human rational speaking discerning being is produced, of a surety, he would not be able to give trust, and even imagine that. For this reason, Allah Almighty says: "Does not man see that it is We Who created him from sperm? Yet behold! he (stands forth) as an open adversary!" (Ya Sin 77)

﴿ أَوَلَمْ يَرَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَـٰهُ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴾

And: "Does Man think that he will be left uncontrolled, (without purpose)? Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (in lowly form)? Then did he become a clinging clot; then did (Allah) make and fashion (him) in due proportion. And of him He made two sexes, male and female. Has not He, (the same), the power to give life to the dead?" (Al-Qiyamah 36-40)

﴿ أَيَحْسَبُ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ أَن يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ۞ أَلَمْ يَكُ نُطْفَةً مِّن مَّنِيٍّ يُمْنَىٰ ۞ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ۞ فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ ٱلزَّوْجَيْنِ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَٱلْأُنثَىٰٓ ۞ أَلَيْسَ ذَٰلِكَ بِقَـٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يُحْـِۧىَ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۞ ﴾

The wonders of creation for the first time are more excellent than those in the recreation once again. Then, how does one deny that resurrection? If your faith in this fact is weak, then, strengthen your faith by considering the wonders of the first creation, for the other creation is like, if not easier than it. If your faith, therefore, is strong enough, then, engage in meditation of the terrors and risks related to that other creation, in order to deprive of your heart comfort and calmness, and stimulate you to get ready for the presentation before the Lord Almighty.

The first thing to meditate in is that which is to hit the ears of the inhabitants of the graves, i.e. the strong sounding of the trumpet, for it is only a single blast, by which the graves split open for the dead to come forth in crowds, all at once, covered with the dust of the earth from the top to the bottom, overwhelmed by anxiety, worry and terror, in expectation for what would come to be. In this respect, Allah Almighty says: "The Trumpet will (just) be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on earth will swoon, except such as it will please Allah (to exempt). Then will a second one be sounded, when, behold, they will be standing and looking on!" (Az-Zumar 68)

﴿ وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنظُرُونَ ۞ ﴾

And: "Finally, when the Trumpet is sounded, That will be - that Day - a Day of Distress, Far from easy for those without Faith." (Al-Muddaththir 8-10)

﴿ فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي ٱلنَّاقُورِ ﴿٨﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ ﴿٩﴾ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

And: Further, they say, "When will this promise (come to pass), if what you say is true?" They will not (have to) wait for aught but a single Blast: it will seize them while they are yet disputing among themselves! No (chance) will they then have, by will, to dispose (of their affairs), nor to return to their own people! The trumpet shall be sounded, when behold! from the sepulchres (men) will rush forth to their Lord! They will say: "Ah! woe unto us! who has raised us up from our beds of repose?" (a voice will say:) "This is what (Allah) Most Gracious had promised, and true was the word of the Messengers!" It will be no more than a single Blast, when lo! they will all be brought up before Us!" (Ya Sin 48-53)

﴿ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ مَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَنُفِخَ فِي ٱلصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنسِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَا مَنۢ بَعَثَنَا مِن مَّرْقَدِنَاۜ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَصَدَقَ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ إِن كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ جَمِيعٌ لَّدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ ﴾

If there is nothing ahead of the dead but the great terror of that sounding of the trumpet, it should be sufficient for them to safeguard themselves from its terrors. It is a sounding and a blast, so strong that because of which all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and what is in between them would swoon, i.e. die, except for such as Allah Almighty wills, i.e. some angels.

In confirmation of that, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "How should I be blessed and the one to whom the trumpet is entrusted has picked up the trumpet in his mouth, inclined his forehead, and paid his attention in expectation for the moment he is commanded to sound it?" (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id).

According to Muqatil, Israfil "peace be upon him" is placing his mouth on the trumpet, whose circle-shaped opening is as wide as is the heavens and the earth, and fixing his sight towards the Throne (of Majesty), in expectation for the very moment he would be ordered to blow the first blow. Once he blows it, all in the heavens and the earth and what in between them would swoon immediately, out of the great terror and horror, except such of angels as Allah Almighty wills, and I mean here Gabriel, Michael, Israfil and the angel of death "peace be upon them". Then, He Almighty would command the angel of death to take up the souls of Gabriel, then Michael, then Israfil, and then order the angel of death to die.

The creatures would spend forty years in the Barzakh following the first blow, after which Allah Almighty would bring Israfil "peace be upon him" to life, and command him to blow the trumpet the second blow, and that is the significance of His statement: "Then will a second one be sounded, when, behold, they will be standing and looking on!" (Az-Zumar 68)

﴿ وَنُفِخَ فِي ٱلصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "From the time the one to whom the trumpet is entrusted was created, he has been placing it before his mouth while moving forward a foot and backward another, in expectation for the very moment he would be commanded to blow it. behold! Safeguard yourselves from (the terror of) that blow."

So, meditate in the creatures and how they would be put to humiliation, submission and meekness at the time they would be raised, for fear of that swoon and in expectation for what would be decreed upon them of happiness and wretchedness. If you are in this world from among the rich and wealthy, you should know that the kings of the earth on that day would be the most humiliated, the most submissive, and the most despicable from among all the people. At that time, the wild animals would come forth in crowds from every direction and mix with the people, in humiliation out of terror of the Day of Resurrection, with no sin they have committed, except that they would be gathered out of the severity of the swoon and the terror of the blow. That is the significance of His statement: "When the wild beasts are herded together (in human habitations)." (At-Takwir 5)

﴿ وَإِذَا ٱلْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ﴾

Then, the devils who were rebellious would come in humiliation and submission, out of the terror of the presentation before Allah Almighty, in confirmation of the statement of Allah Almighty: "So, by your Lord, without doubt, We shall gather them together, and (also) the Evil Ones (with them); then shall We bring them forth on their knees round about Hell." (Maryam 68)

﴿ فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَٱلشَّيَـٰطِينَ ثُمَّ لَنُحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا ﴾

CHAPTER TWO

ACCOUNT OF THE MUSTERING LAND AND ITS INHABITANTS

Consider then how, after resurrection, they would be driven, naked and barefooted, to the land of mustering, which is plain, soft white, in which there would be no crookedness nor curving, nor a hill behind which anyone might hide himself, nor a lowness in which anyone might disappear from the sights of others: on the contrary, it is a very plain land to which they would be driven in crowds. Exalted be He Who would gather all the creatures, in their difference, from all directions and sides of the earth, by both the first and the second blow. It is then fitting for such hearts, on that day, to be fearful and for those sights to be submissive.

In this respect, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, all the people would be mustered together on a white plain soft land like a pure loaf, in which there would be no building for anyone to hide himself therein." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Sahl Ibn Sa'd).

Think not that this land would be like that of the world: they only share in the name. in confirmation of that, Allah Almighty says: "One day the Earth will be changed to a different Earth, and so will be the Heavens, and (men) will be

marshalled forth, before Allah, the One, the Irresistible." (Ibrahim 48)

﴿ يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ ٱلْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ۖ وَبَرَزُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ ﴾

According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" in his comment on it: "It would change in size and shape, and have no trees nor mountains, nor valleys nor rivers, and be extended and made spacious: A white soft land like silver on which no blood has ever been shed, nor a mistake ever been committed. As for the sky, its sun, stars moon, and all celestial bodies would disappear.

Consider, O poor, the terror of that day. If all the people gather together on that plain land, the stars over them would scatter about, the sun would disappear, leading to deep darkness. Such being the case, the sky would turn from over their heads and rent asunder, given its strength and thickness, as much as is equal to a five-hundred journey, and the angels standing on its edges and sides: How terrible would the sound of its splitting be on your ear, and how awful is the day on which the sky would rent asunder, and crumble and go to pieces like melted silver. On that day, the sky would be like melted brass, people like moths scattered about, and mountains like carded wool, naked and barefooted. In confirmation of that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The people will be gathered barefooted, naked, and uncircumcised, sunk in their sweat up to their earlobes." Sawdah "Allah be pleased with her" the narrator of the Hadith said: I said: "O Allah's Apostle! Will the men and the women look at each other?" He said: "The situation will be too hard for them to pay attention to that." (Ath-Tha'alibi and Al-Baghawi; and Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her"). How great is a day on which people would be raised as naked and barefooted! But even, none of them would have the power to look at the other.

Furthermore, some of them would be raised walking on their faces, without being able to turn their faces. In confirmation of that, it is reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, the people would be raised and be of three divisions: Some would be riding, others walking on foot, and others prone on their faces." A man said: "O Messenger of Allah! How should they be able to walk prone on their faces?" he "peace be upon him" said: "He, Who enabled them to walk on foot has the power to make them walk prone on their faces." (At-Tirmidhi; and Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas).

But mankind, by nature, denies what he sees and imagines not. Had he not seen the serpent walking on its abdomen, he would not have been able to imagine there are beings walking on other organs than the feet, and so on. So, beware of denying anything of the wonders of the Day of Judgement just depending on its difference and unfamiliarity in comparison with the things of this world. Indeed, had you not seen the wonders in this world, and they had been offered to you before you saw them, you would hasten to deny them.

Concerning The Sweat

Remember in this respect the extremely big crowd in the mustering land of

the creatures from the seven heavens and the earths, and what between them, from the first to the last generations of creation. Then, the sun would rise upon them with its scorching heat multiplied many times, and be brought at a distance of but two bow-lengths or (even) nearer to the heads of the people. There would be then no shade on the land other than the shade of the Lord of the worlds, therewith none would shade himself but those made near to Him. Then, the creatures would thrust each other, forced by throng and scorching heat, and shyness of being put to scandal and shame, at the time of presentation before the Compeller of the heavens and the earth. From the combination of the blaze of sun, the scorching heat of breaths, and the hearts burning with the fire of shyness and fear, sweat would flood from the root of each hair until it would flow on the plain ground of resurrection and rise up to their bodies, each according to his/her position and status with Allah Almighty: Some up to their knees, others to their waists, others to their breasts, and others to their earlobes, and so on.

In confirmation of that, it is reported on the authority of Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "It is the Day on which the people would stand to the Lord of the worlds, until anyone of them would sink in his sweat up to the half of his earlobes." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is further reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, the people would sweat so much that their perspiration would flow on the ground as much as seventy cubits, in which they would sink up to their chins." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

According to another narration, the Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "They would keep standing, with their eyes fixedly staring up to the sky as long as forty years, until they would sink in their sweat out of their severe distress." (Ibn Adi on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him").

It is reported on the authority of Uqbah Ibn Amir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Prophet "peace be upon him", said: "On the Day of Judgement, the sun would come close to the earth so much that the people would sweat (each according to his status): Some up to their heels, others up to the half of their legs, others up to their knees, others up to their thighs, others up to their waists, others up to their mouths where (beckoning with his hand) it would rein them, and others would be entirely covered by sweat." He struck with his hand over his head as such. (Ahmad).

Think, O poor, about that severe sweat and hard suffering of the people of resurrection to the extent that one might invoke: "O Lord! Relieve me of that distress and waiting even if it is to lead me to the fire of Hell!" so far, the reckoning has not started yet. You would be one of those and you do not know to which extent you would sink in sweat. You should know that every sweat you have not sweated because of your trouble in the Cause of Allah Almighty, through Hajj, Jihad, prayer, fasting, standing (at night for supererogatory prayer), fulfilling the needs of Muslims, enduring the difficulty of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil, you would sweat it

because of shyness and fear on the Day of Judgement. Were mankind to be safe from ignorance and haughtiness, he would know that the sweat of trouble he receives in the acts of worship in this world is very easier and shorter than the sweat of distress and suffering from the long waiting he would receive in the hereafter.

CHAPTER THREE
ACCOUNT OF THE DURATION OF THE DAY OF RESURRECTION

Allah Almighty says: "A Day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds." (Al-Mutaffiffin 6)

﴿ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلنَّاسُ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴾

In their comment on that, Ka'b and Qatadah said: "They would keep standing for three hundred years."

It is reported on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited: "A Day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds" and then said: "What do you think if you are gathered by Allah Almighty in the same way as arrows are gathered in a quiver for fifty thousand years, during which He would not look at you?" [At-Tabarani).

According to Al-Hassan: "What do you think of a day on which people would keep standing on their feet for fifty thousand years, during which they would neither eat nor drink, until when they would be given to severe hunger and thirst , they would be taken to the fire of Hell to drink from its boiling hot spring?"

They will suffer such distress and trouble to the extent that they will not be able to bear or stand. Then the people will say: "Don't you see what state you have reached? Won't you look for someone who can intercede for you with your Lord?" Some people will say to others: "Go to Adam." So they will go to Adam and say to him: "You are the father of mankind; Allah created you with His Own Hand, and breathed into you from His Spirit; and ordered the angels to prostrate before you; so (please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are? Don't you see what condition we have reached?" Adam will say: "Today my Lord has become angry as He has never become before, nor will ever become thereafter. He forbade me (to eat of the fruit of) the tree, but I disobeyed Him. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Noah." So they will go to Noah and say (to him): "O Noah! You are the first Messenger sent by Allah to the people of the earth, and Allah has named you a thankful slave; (please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are? Don't you see what condition we have reached?" He will say: "Today my Lord has become angry as He has never become before, nor will ever become thereafter. I had (in the world) the right to make one definitely accepted invocation, and I made it against my nation. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Abraham." They will go to Abraham and say: "O Abraham! You are Allah's Apostle and His bosom friend from among the people of the earth; so (please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are? don't you see what condition

we have reached?" He will say to them: "My Lord has today become angry as He has never become before, nor will ever become thereafter. I had told three lies (in the world). Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Moses." The people will then go to Moses and say: "O Moses! You are Allah's Apostle and Allah gave you superiority above the others with this message and with His direct Talk to you; (please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are? Don't you see what condition we have reached?" Moses will say: "My Lord has today become angry as He has never become before, nor will ever become thereafter. I killed a person whom I had not been ordered to kill. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Jesus." So they will go to Jesus and say: "O Jesus! You are Allah's Apostle and His Word, which He sent to Mary, and a superior soul created by Him, and you talked to the people while still young in the cradle. (Please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are? don't you see what condition we have reached?" Jesus will say: "My Lord has today become angry as He has never become before nor will ever become thereafter." Jesus will not mention any sin, but will say: "Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Muhammad." So they will come to me and say: "O Muhammad! You are Allah's Apostle and the last of The Prophets, and Allah forgave your earlier and later sins. (Please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are? Don't you see what condition we have reached?"" The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" added: "Then I will go beneath Allah's Throne and fall in prostration before my Lord. Then Allah will guide me to such praises and glorifications to Him as He has never guided anybody else before me. Then it will be said: "O Muhammad! Raise your head. Ask, and you will be granted. Intercede and it (your intercession) will be accepted."" (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him").

It should be known to you that the more one's wait in this world for death out of patience on leaving pleasures and delights, the short his waiting would be on that day in particular.

In confirmation of that, when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about the duration of that day, he said: "By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, it would be alleviated on the faithful believer (no matter how long it might be) until it would seem to him easier than the obligatory written prayer he performs in this world." (Abu Ya'li and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri).

So, strive your utmost to be of those faithful believers on whom its difficulties would be alleviated. As long as you still are living, it is up to you to get ready for that. Work in short days for long ones, if you keep patient for the whole of your lifetime, say one hundred years on average, in order to rescue yourself from the trouble of suffering of a day whose duration would be as long as fifty thousand years, of a surety, you would be a great winner.

CHAPTER FOUR

ACCOUNT OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT, ITS TERRORS AND NAMES

Get ready, O poor, with the utmost of your power and capacity, for that Day

of Resurrection, that would be very long, and its time has become very close, although people feel not. It is the day When the Sky is cleft asunder, the Stars are scattered, the Oceans are suffered to burst forth, the Graves are turned upside down: (Then) shall each soul know what it has sent forward and (what it has) kept back. It is the day When the Sky is rent asunder, And hearkens to (the Command of) its Lord, and it must needs (do so), and the Earth is flattened out, And casts forth what is within it and becomes (clean) empty, And hearkens to (the Command of) its Lord, and it must (needs do so): (then will come home the full Reality). It is a day When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up, the stars fall, losing their luster, the mountains vanish (like a mirage), the she-camels, ten months with young, are left untended, the wild beasts are herded together (in human habitations), the oceans boil over with a swell, the souls are sorted out, (being joined, like with like), the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned, For what crime she was killed, the Scrolls are laid open, the World on High is unveiled, the Blazing Fire is kindled to fierce heat, And the Garden is brought near: (Then) shall each soul know what it has put forward.

It is the day When the Earth is shaken to its (utmost) convulsion, And the Earth throws up her burdens (from within), On that Day will it declare its tidings: For that your Lord will have given her inspiration. On that Day will men proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the Deeds that they (had done). Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it. It is the day when the earth is moved, and its mountains, and they are crushed to powder at one stroke, On that Day shall the (Great) Event come to pass, And the sky will be rent asunder, for it will that Day be flimsy, And the angels will be on its sides, and eight will, that Day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them. That Day shall you be brought to Judgment: not an act of yours that you hide will be hidden. On that day, the mountains would be removed, and you will see the earth as a level stretch, and all of them shall be gathered , all together, and none of them will be left.

It is the day when the earth shall be shaken to its depths, And the mountains shall be crumbled to atoms, Becoming dust scattered abroad. It is a day when men will be like moths scattered about, And the mountains will be like carded wool. On that day, every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load (unformed): you shall see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk: But dreadful will be the Wrath of Allah Almighty. On that day the Earth will be changed to a different Earth, and so will be the Heavens, and (men) will be marshalled forth, before Allah, the One, the Irresistible.

On that day the Mountains will be uprooted and scatter as dust, and be left as plains smooth and level. Nothing crooked or curved will you see in their place. On that Day will they follow the Caller (straight): No crookedness (can they show) him: All sounds shall humble themselves in the Presence of (Allah) Most Gracious: Nothing shall you hear but the tramp of their feet (as they march). On that Day shall no intercession avail except for those for whom permission has

been granted by (Allah) Most Gracious and whose word is acceptable to Him. On that day, you see the mountains and think them firmly fixed: but they shall pass away as the clouds pass away. On that day, the sky is rent asunder, and it becomes red like ointment, whereas no question will be asked of man or Jinn as to his sin. On that day, every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done, and all the evil it has done, it will wish there were a great distance between it and its evil.

It is the day whose mention made hoary the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" asked him: "I see that you have grown hoary O Messenger of Allah (what is the matter)?" He said: "The (Surah of) Hud and its sisters (in which the Day of Judgement is mentioned with its terrors) have made me hoary." (At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim and rendered Hassan and Sahih).

The Day of Judgement is mentioned in the Quran with different names. But the lots of names should not divert us from their meanings, since the purpose of this chapter is just to open the minds to the mysteries and secrets of each one of them. So, you should be eager to know well their meanings.

It is the Day of judgement, the Day of grief, the Day of regret, the Day of reckoning, the Day of questioning, the Day of race (to good), the Day of calling to account, the Day of competition, the Day of earthquake, the Day of obliteration, the Day of swoon, the Day of reality, the Day of calamity, the Day of violent commotion, the Day of Overwhelming (Event), the day of resurrection to come very near, the day of the great event, the day of the devastating (event), the day of the Deafening Noise, the day of meeting together, the day of departure, the day of being brought together (to Allah), the day of exacting retribution, the day of calling each other, the day of punishment, the day of return (to Allah), the day of deciding the cases, the day of recompense, the day of flight, the day of abidance, the day of trial, the day of weeping, the day of mustering, the day of threat, the day of presentation (before the Lord Almighty), the day of balance, the day of truth, the day of gathering, the day of raising (the dead), the day of conquest, the day of disgrace. It is also a great day, a difficult day, a terrible day. It is the day of retribution, the day of certainty, the day of resurrection, the day of destiny, the day of sounding the trumpet, the day of the blast, the day of tremble, the day of deterrence, the day of intoxication, the day of terror, the day of the end of the journey, the day of the fright, the day of shelter, the day of appointment, the day of the place of return, the day of watching, the day of anxiety, the day of perspiration, the day of neediness (to Allah), the day of denial (of each other), the day of splitting, the day of standing, the day of coming out, the day of eternity, the day of mutual gain and loss...to the end of this series of names.

Woe to all the people in general, and to us, Muslims, from among them in particular: it is to us, apart from the people, that the chief of Messengers and Prophets "peace be upon him" was sent, and on him the Holy Book was revealed, in which Allah Almighty tells us about all those attributes of the Day of Recompense, and then informs us about our heedlessness saying: "Closer and

closer to mankind comes their Reckoning: yet they heed not and they turn away. Never comes (aught) to them of a renewed Message from their Lord, but they listen to it as in jest." (Al-Anbiya 1-2)

﴿ ٱقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِى غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿١﴾ مَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِم مُّحْدَثٍ إِلَّا ٱسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

Then, He informs us about the nearness of the Day of Judgement saying: "The Hour (of Judgment) is nigh, and the moon is cleft asunder. But if they see a Sign, they turn away, and say, "This is (but) transient magic."" (Al-Qamar 1-2)

﴿ ٱقْتَرَبَتِ ٱلسَّاعَةُ وَٱنشَقَّ ٱلْقَمَرُ ﴿١﴾ وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ ءَايَةً يُعْرِضُوا۟ وَيَقُولُوا۟ سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

The best thing we do is to recite that Qur'an which does not go beyond our throats, without considering its meanings and warnings. We seek refuge with Allah form that heedlessness, and ask him to deliver us with His extensive mercy.

CHAPTER FIVE
ACCOUNT OF INTERROGATION

Think, O poor, after those terrors and frights, about the moment you would be questioned directly by Allah Almighty with no interpreter between you and Him, about all of your deeds, their significant and insignificant, much and little, major and minor. While you are in the thick of the distresses and calamities of the resurrection, behold! Angels of formidable bodies and huge persons would descend from the openings of the sky, with the command to take hold the sinners and criminals by their forelocks and drive them to be presented before Allah the Compeller to question them about their sins.

In this respect, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah Almighty has an angel (whose body is so much huge that) the distance in between his eyelids is as long as a one hundred-year journey."

What do you think then about yourself, if you see those angels coming to take you by your forelock to the standing of presentation? But in spite of their hugeness, they would be submissive to the terror of that day, feeling the wrath and anger of Allah Almighty on (the sinners and criminals among) His servants. When they descend, there would be no Prophet, nor a sincere lover and affirmer of truth, nor a righteous but that he would fall in prostration to his chin, for fear he might be intended. That would be the state of the closest among the creatures to Allah Almighty. Then, what to you think about the disobedient sinners? At that time, out of the severe terror, some people would hasten to ask those angels: "Is our Lord among you?" but the angels would be scared by their question, out of deeming their Creator Almighty far beyond being among them. They would call: "Exalted be our Lord! It is not consonant with His Majesty to be among us. But He is going to come after us."

Then, the angels would stand in a row surrounding the creatures from all sides, and all of them would have the mark of submission, fear and humiliation. At that time, Allah Almighty fulfills His statement: "Then shall We question those to whom Our Message was sent and those by whom We sent it. And verily

We shall recount their whole story with knowledge, for We were never absent (at any time or place)." (Al-A'raf 6-7)

﴿ فَلَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ۝ فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِم بِعِلْمٍ ۖ وَمَا كُنَّا غَآئِبِينَ ۝ ﴾

And: "Therefore, by your Lord, We will, of a surety, call them to account, For all their deeds." (Al-Hijr 92-93)

﴿ فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْـَٔلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝ عَمَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ۝ ﴾

Then, He Almighty would start with the Messengers and Prophets "peace be upon them" in confirmation of His statement: "One day will Allah gather the Messengers together, and ask: "What was the response you received (from men to your teaching)?" They will say: "We have no knowledge: it is You who know in full all that is hidden." (Al-Ma'idah 109)

﴿ ۞ يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَآ أُجِبْتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلْغُيُوبِ ۝ ﴾

Then, Noah "peace be upon him" would be invited and asked: "Have you reported the message?" He would answered in the affirmative. His people would be invited and asked:"Has he conveyed to you the message?" they would say: "No warner has ever come to us."

Then, Jesus "peace be upon him" would be brought and asked: "O Jesus the son of Mary! did you say unto men, 'Worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of Allah'?" He will say: "Glory to You! never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, You wouldst indeed have known it. You know what is in my heart, though I know not what is in Your. For You know in full all that is hidden. Never said I to them aught except what You did command me to say, to wit, 'Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord'; and I was a witness over them whilst I dwelt amongst them; when you did take me up you was the Watcher over them, and You are a witness to all things. If You do punish them, they are Your servants: if You do forgive them, You are the Exalted in power, the Wise." (Al-Ma'idah 116-118)

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ ٱتَّخِذُونِى وَأُمِّىَ إِلَٰهَيْنِ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِىٓ أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِى بِحَقٍّ ۚ إِن كُنتُ قُلْتُهُۥ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُۥ ۚ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِى وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلْغُيُوبِ ۝ مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَآ أَمَرْتَنِى بِهِۦٓ أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبَّكُمْ ۚ وَكُنتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِى كُنتَ أَنتَ ٱلرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۝ إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۖ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ۝ ﴾

After long years of waiting and suffering, the angels would come and call the people one by one to come to be presented before their Lord Almighty. All of them would tremble in awe of the moment, and some people would wish to be taken to the fire in order for their evils deeds not to be presented before the Compeller, and their shame not exposed in front of all the people. Before questioning, the Light of the Throne (of Majesty) would rise and the whole earth would then shine by the Light of the Lord Almighty, and every servant would become certain of the coming of the Compeller to question him, and everyone

would think that it is he alone who would be taken by question.

Then, Allah Almighty would say to Gabriel "peace be upon him": “O Gabriel! Bring the fire of Hell.” He would go to Hell and say to it: “O Hell! Answer the invitation of your Lord and Creator Almighty.” Then, its keepers would jump and rush out of anger on the sinners who disobeyed Allah Almighty. That would be after it has blown out for the first time. When it blows out for the second time, the people would grow more fearful and scared, thinking they would be seized and taken to it. Then, when it blows out for the third time, they would fall down prone on their faces, with their eyes fixedly staring, in expectation for what would occur to them.

Then, Allah Almighty would turn to the Messengers "peace be upon them" and ask them: “What answer have you received (from your nations)?” At that moment, the people in general, and the disobedient among them in particular, would be given to a great terror, to the extent that the parent would flee away from his child, the brother from his brother, the husband from his wife, and so on. Then, one by one would be taken and questioned by Allah Almighty about his deeds, and about what he has done in public and secret.

In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that they (the Companions) said: “O Messenger of Allah, will we be able to see our Lord on the Day of Judgment?” He said: “Do you feel any difficulty in seeing the sun at noon when there is no cloud over it?” They said: “No.” He said: “Do you feel any difficulty in seeing the moon on the fourteenth night when there is no cloud over it?” They said: “No.” Thereupon he said: “By Allah Who is One in Whose Hand is my life. you will not face any difficulty in seeing your Lord but only as much as you feel in seeing one of them. Then Allah would sit in judgment upon the servant and would say: ‘O, so and so, did I not honour you and make you the chief and provide you the spouse and subdue for you horses, camels, and afforded you an opportunity to rule over your subjects?’ He would say: ‘Yes.’ It would be said: ‘Did you not think that you would meet Us?’ He would say: ‘No.’ He (Allah) would say: ‘Well, We forget you as you forgot Us.’” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim, and the addition is reported by Muslim only).

Think, O poor, about yourself when you would be questioned as such, and if you deny, your organs would bear witness against you:

It is narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We were in the company of The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" when he smiled and said: “Do you know why I have laughed?” We said: “Allah and His Messenger know best.” Thereupon he said: “It is because of the (fact that I remembered the) talk which the servant would have with his Lord (on the Day of judgment). He would say: ‘O My Lord, have you not guaranteed me protection against injustice?’ He would say: ‘Yes.’ Then the servant would say: ‘I do not deem valid any witness against me but my own self.’ He would say: ‘Well, enough would be the witness of your self against you and that of the two angels who had been appointed to record your deeds.’ Then the seal would be set upon his mouth and it would be said to his hands and feet to speak and they would speak of his deeds. Then the mouth would be made free to talk, and he would say (to the hands and feet): ‘Be away, let there be

curse of Allah upon you. It was for your safety that I have contended."' (Muslim).

We seek refuge with Allah Almighty from being given to disgrace in front of the people by the witness of our organs against us. But, on the other hand, Allah Almighty promised to conceal the misdeeds of the faithful believers and safeguard him from being put to that shame in front of anyone.

In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Safwan Ibn Muhriz that a person said to Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with both": How did you hear The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" as saying something about the private conversation (to be between a servant and his Lord)?" He said: I heard him say: A believer will be brought to his Lord "Exalted and Glorified be He" on the Day of Resurrection and He would place upon him His veil (of Light) and make him confess his faults and say: 'Do you recognize (your faults)?' He would say: 'O my Lord, I do recognize (them).' He (the Lord) would say: 'I concealed them for you in the world, and today I forgive them for you.' He would then be given the Book containing (the account of his) good deeds. As far as the non-believers and hypocrites are concerned, there would be general announcement about them before all creation telling them that these (people, i.e. non-believers and hypocrites) told a lie about Allah Almighty." (Muslim).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Whoever conceals a defect of a believer on him (in this world), Allah Almighty would conceal his defect on the Day of Judgement."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "There is no servant of you but that he would be questioned by Allah Almighty with no interpreter nor a veil between them." (Ibn Adi).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "When anyone of you would meet Allah, he will meet Him without an interpreter between him and Allah to interpret for him, and Allah will say to him: "Didn't I send a messenger to teach you?" He will say: "Yes." Allah will say: "Didn't I give you wealth and do you favors?" He will say: "Yes." Then he will look to his right and see nothing but Hell, and look to his left and see nothing but Hell. So, Save yourself from the (Hell) Fire even with half a date (to be given in charity) and if you do not find half a date, then with a good pleasant word." (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Adi Ibn Hatim).

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "There would be none of you but that Allah Almighty would meet him alone, in the same way as anyone of you becomes alone with the moon on the night when it is full. Then He would say to him: "O mankind! What has deceived you about me? O son of Adam! What have you done in what you have learnt? O mankind! What answer have you given to the Messengers? O mankind! Have I not been a watcher over your eyes while looking therewith at what was unlawful for you? Have I not been a watcher over your ears…" and so on until he counted all his organs.

According to Mujahid: "No foot of a servant would ever move from the presence of Allah Almighty until he is questioned about four things: His lifetime: In which thing he has consumed it; his knowledge: what he has done with it; his property: from which sources he has earned it, and in which things he has spent

it; and his body: In which he has utilized it"; (and according to another version "and about his youth: in which he has exhausted it").

CHAPTER SIX
ACCOUNT OF THE BALANCE (OF DEEDS)

While you are in meditation, do not be heedless of the balance of deeds and acts, and how the records would scatter about in order for the people to receive, some in their right hands and others in their left hands. That is because after reckoning, the people would be divided into three: Some would have no good deeds at all: Then, a black neck would come out of the fire and pick them up in the same way as a bird picks up grains and then throw them into the fire, which would swallow them, and they would be addressed: "Let you be in wretchedness after which you would receive no happiness."

The second division are those who would have no misdeeds, thereupon they would be addressed: "Let those who praise Allah in whichever state they are stand!" they would stand and be driven to Paradise; and the same would be done to those who stand at night (for supererogatory prayers), and then with those whom neither trade nor transaction in this world divert from the remembrance of Allah Almighty. They would be addressed: "Let you be in happiness after which you would experience no wretchedness."

The third division, which constitutes the majority of people, stands for those who mix a good deed with a misdeed. Although it is perfectly known to Allah Almighty which of their good deeds or misdeeds prevail over the other, but He Almighty would like to let them know that, in order that they would learn His great favor upon them should He forgive for them, and His justice should He punish them. At that time, the records would scatter about, containing both good deeds and misdeeds, and the balance would be set up. The sights would remain fixedly staring at the records, as to whom of them would receive his own record with his right hand, and who with his left hand, and then to the balance beam, as to the side of the misdeeds or to that of the good deeds it would incline. That is a state in which people would become reckless and lose their minds.

It is narrated on the authority of Al-Hassan from A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that once the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" placed his head in her lap and then fell asleep. Then, she remembered the hereafter thereupon she went on weeping so much that her tears flowed and dropped on his cheek. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" got up and asked her: "What does cause you to weep O A'ishah?" She said: "I remembered the hereafter thereupon I went on weeping: will you remember your families on the Day of Judgement?" The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There are three positions, at which no one of the people will remember but himself: when the weighing scale of deeds are set up until he knows whether his balance of good deeds will be light or heavy; on receiving the record (of deeds), when one will say: "Ah here! Read ye my Record!" until he knows the place of his record, and whether he will receive it with his right or left hand, or from his back; and on Sirat (placing the bridge over Hell)." (Abu Dawud).

It is reported on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: "On the Day of Judgement, the son of Adam would be brought and made to stand between both weighing scales, and an angel would be entrusted to him. If the scale of his good deeds is too heavy to overweigh, the angel would call so loudly that all the people would hear him: "So and so, son of Adam has become happy, after which he would receive no wretchedness." But if it is too light to overweigh, he would call so loudly that all the people would hear him: "So and so, son of Adam has become wretched, after which he would receive no happiness." when scales of good deeds are light, the angels of punishment would come having rods of iron and wearing dresses of fire, and take the portion doomed to the fire into the fire of Hell."

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah will say (on the Day of Judgement): "O Adam!" Adam will reply: "Yes, I am responding to your call, and all goodness be in Your Hand." Allah will say: "Bring out the people of the fire." Adam will say: "O Allah! How many are the people of the Fire?" Allah will reply: "From every one thousand, take out nine-hundred-and ninety-nine." At that time children will become hoary-headed, every pregnant female will have a miscarriage, and one will see mankind as drunken, yet they will not be drunken, but dreadful will be the Wrath of Allah." The companions of The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" asked: "O Allah's Apostle! Who is that (excluded) one?" He said: "Rejoice with glad tidings; one person will be (selected to enter Paradise) from you and one-thousand will be (selected to enter the Hell fire) from Gog and Magog."

The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "By Him, in Whose Hands my life is, I hope that you will be one-fourth of the people of Paradise." We praised and magnified Allah. He added: "By Him, in Whose hand my life is! I hope that you will be one-third of the people of Paradise." We praised and magnified Allah. He said: "By Him, in Whose hand my life is! I hope that you will be half the people of Paradise." We praised and magnified Allah. He further said: "The example of you (Muslims compared in number) with the other nations (of non-Muslims) is like a white hair in the skin of a black ox, or like a round hairless spot on the foreleg of a donkey." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

CHAPTER SEVEN

ACCOUNT OF FOES AND REMOVAL OF INJUSTICES

Now, you have come to know the terror and danger of the balance, and how the eyes would keep fixedly staring to the balance beam in order to see to which direction it would incline: Then, he whose balance (of good deeds) will be (found) heavy, Will be in a Life of good pleasure and satisfaction, But he whose balance (of good deeds) will be (found) light, Will have his home in a bottomless Pit, which is a Fire blazing fiercely.

It should be known to you that none would be saved from the balance of deeds but he who accounted himself in this world, and weighed his acts and deeds on the measure of Sharia. Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Reckon

yourself (in this world) before you would be reckoned (in the hereafter), and weigh your deeds before they would be weighed."

To reckon oneself is to turn to Allah in sincere repentance before death and give up all sins and crimes he did, to complete what he indulged in concerning the obligatory deeds, to give back all injustices he committed, and seek clearance from everyone whom he harmed or abused, until when he dies, there would remain no injustice nor an obligatory duty due on him: such would enter Paradise without reckoning, unlike him who dies before giving back the injustices: in which case he would be encircled by his foes who would demand their rights from him. Such being the case, and you are unable to avert them from yourself, as you used to do in this world, behold! Allah the Compeller would call publicly: "Today, every soul would be recompensed with that which it earned, and there would be no injustice." At that time, you would get so much frightened, and recall what Allah Almighty said to you on the tongue of His Messenger "peace be upon him": "Think not that Allah does not heed the deeds of those who do wrong. He but gives them respite against a Day when the eyes will fixedly stare in horror. They are running forward with necks outstretched, their heads uplifted, their gaze returning not towards them, and their hearts a (gaping) void! So warn mankind of the Day when the Wrath will reach them: then will the wrong-doers say: "Our Lord! respite us (if only) for a short Term: We will answer Your Call, and follow the Messengers!" "What! were you not wont to swear aforetime that you should suffer no decline?"" (Ibrahim 42-44)

﴿ رَبَّنَآ أَخِّرْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ نُّجِبْ دَعْوَتَكَ وَنَتَّبِعِ ٱلرُّسُلَ ۗ أَوَلَمْ تَكُونُوٓا۟ أَقْسَمْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ مَا لَكُم مِّن زَوَالٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

Then, your deeds which you troubled yourself and strove your utmost to do along your lifetime would be taken from you and given to your foes in recompense for their rights they have on you.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "peace be upon him" said: "Do you know who is the bankrupt?" They said: "The bankrupt among us is one who has neither money with him nor any property." He said: "The real bankrupt of my Ummah would be he who would come on the Day of Resurrection with prayer, fasting and charity, (but he will find himself bankrupt on that day as he will have exhausted the good deeds) because he reviled others, brought calumny against others, unlawfully devoured the wealth of others, shed the blood of others and beat others; so his good deeds would be credited to the account of those (who suffered at his hand). If his good deeds fall short to clear the account, their sins would be entered in his account and he would be thrown in the (Hell) Fire." ("(Muslim).

Consider then your situation on that day. You could hardly find a good deed to remain pure for you from the evil of showing off, and even if you could find it, your foes would hasten to take it in fulfillment of their rights on you. How should you hope for salvation from all injustices you have committed during your entire life only on one day on which even the hornless would exact retribution

from the horned of sheep?

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" that once the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saw two sheep goring each other, thereupon he said: "O Abu Dharr! Do you know for which reason those are goring each other?" I said: "No." on that he said: "But Allah Almighty knows well and He will judge between them on the Day of Judgement." (Ahmad).

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have We omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end" (Al-An'am 38)

﴿وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَٰٓئِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّآ أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُم ۚ مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾﴾

Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" said: "All creatures would be mustered, all together on the Day of Judgement, and it would be out of perfect justice of Allah Almighty that the hornless would be enabled to exact retribution from the horned one, after which He would command all to turn into dust. That would be at the very moment the disbeliever would say: "Would that I become dust!"

So, beware, O poor, of the day on which you would find your good deeds omitted from your record, and when you ask about that, you would be told that they have gone to your foes whom you wronged in this world. You would also find in your record misdeeds which you have never committed, and others which you strove your utmost to avoid and avert from yourself, and when you ask about them, you would be told that those belong to your foes whom you oppressed in the world, and since your good deeds fall short of recompense, their misdeeds have been transferred to your account.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Indeed, Satan has despaired that idols be worshipped in the Arab Peninsula. But meanwhile, he has been satisfied from you with what is less than that, i.e. only the trivial sins, which are destructives. So, safeguard yourselves from injustice as much as you could. Indeed, the servant might come on the Day of Judgement with acts of worship as much as mountains, thinking they would deliver him (from punishment). But the servants continue to come upon him in succession: One saying: 'O Lord! So and so has committed an injustice against me', thereupon Allah would say: "Omit from his good deeds', and so on until nothing of his good deeds would remain for him. The example of such is like a group of travelers who descended in a desert, and they had no fire wood with them. They scattered about and collected fire wood and then kindled a great fire, and did what they liked to do." (Ahmad and Al-Baihaqi for the last portion; and Muslim on the authority of Jabir for the first portion).

It is further reported that when the following was revealed: "Truly you will die (one day), and truly they (too) will die (one day). In the End will you (all), on

the Day of Judgment, settle your disputes in the presence of your Lord." (Az-Zumar 30-31)

﴿ إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ۝ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ ۝ ﴾

Az-Zubair "Allah be pleased with him" said: "O Messenger of Allah! Would our disputes in this world be repeated on us once again in the hereafter?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Yes, your disputes would be repeated on you until everyone would take his right that is due to him." (Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" having said: "On the Day of Judgement, the servants would be mustered by Allah Almighty as naked and covered with dust, and they would have such and such." We asked: "What is such and such?" he "peace be upon him" said: "They would have nothing. Then, their Lord Almighty would call them with a voice audible to all of them, be they far or near, saying: "I am the Sovereign! I am the One to Whom all the creatures owe favor! It is not fitting for anyone among the inhabitants of Paradise to enter Paradise, nor for anyone among the denizens of the fire upon whom an injustice is due until I take the legal retribution from him; and it is not fitting for anyone among the denizens of the fire to enter the fire (of Hell) nor for anyone among the inhabitants of Paradise, on whom an injustice is due until I take legal retribution from him."" We said: "How is that given that we would come to Allah Almighty as naked and covered with dust?" he "peace be upon him" said: "You would have good deeds and misdeeds." (Ahmad on the authority of Ubaidullah Ibn Unais).

So, fear Allah, O servants of Allah, and safeguard yourselves from committing injustices against the people, by usurpation of their property with no just cause, dishonoring them, harming them, or ill-treating them. If one has committed a lot of injustices against others from which he liked to repent, and it is difficult on him to take clearance from those whom he wronged, let him increase his good deeds for the day of legal retribution, and do some good deeds in secret, i.e. between him and Allah Almighty, perchance he would come close to Allah Almighty, and obtain His kindness and favor which He keeps for such as forgive others.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that while the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was sitting he smiled so much that his front teeth were visible. Umar asked him: "What causes you to weep O Messenger of Allah? Let my father and mother be sacrificed for you." He "peace be upon him" said: "Two men of my Ummah knelt in front of Allah, the Lord of Honor, and one of them said to Him: "O my Lord! Take back my injustice from my brother." Allah Almighty said: "Give back your brother his injustice." He said: "O Lord! Nothing of his good deeds has remained with him." Allah Almighty said to the petitioner: "Then, what do you do and nothing of his good deeds has remained with him?" he said: "O Lord! Then, let him take some of my sins." On that the eyes of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" shed tears and said: "That would be a great day, on which

the people would need that others should take from their sins." Then, he resumed: Allah Almighty said to the petitioner: "Raise your head and look at those gardens." He raised his head and said: "O Lord! I see lofty towers of silver and palaces of gold decked with pearl. For any of the Prophets, affirmers and lovers of truth or martyrs have those been kept?" Allah said: "For him who would give Me the price." The man said: "O Lord! Who could afford for that?" Allah said: "You have the price of that." he said: "What is that?" He said: "Your forgiveness of your brother." He said: "O Lord! I have forgiven him." Allah said: "Then, take hold of the hand of your brother and admit him to Paradise." Then the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Fear Allah and mend what is between you, for Allah mends what is between the believers." (Ibn Abu Ad-Dunya and Al-Hakim).

CHAPTER EIGHT: ACCOUNT OF SIRAT

Having meditated in all of those terrors and risks, move with your reflection to the Sirat (the bridge to be held over Hell), in connection with which Allah Almighty said: "The day We shall gather the righteous to (Allah) Most Gracious, like a band presented before a king for honours. And We shall drive the sinners to hell, like thirsty cattle driven down to water, None shall have the power of intercession, but such a one as has received permission (or promise) from (Allah) Most Gracious." (Maryam 85-87)

﴿ يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ وَفْدًا ﴿٨٥﴾ وَنَسُوقُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا ﴿٨٦﴾ لَّا يَمْلِكُونَ ٱلشَّفَـٰعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ عِندَ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ عَهْدًا ﴿٨٧﴾ ﴾

And: "Bring you up," it shall be said, "The wrong-doers and their wives, and the things they worshipped, Besides Allah, and lead them to the Way to the (Fierce) Fire! But stop them, for they must be asked." (As-Saffat 22-24)

﴿ ۞ ٱحْشُرُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ وَأَزْوَٰجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَٱهْدُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَقِفُوهُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُم مَّسْـُٔولُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

Following those terrors, the people would be driven to the bridge that would be held over Hell. It is a path, sharper than a sword and thinner than a hair. Thus, whoever stands upright on the straight path in this world, would move easily and lightly on the bridge that is over Hell in the hereafter; and whoever swerves from the truth in this world, and overburdens himself with sins and crimes, would surely stumble with the first step he would take on the bridge of the hereafter.

Consider then your state while being over that bridge, seeing how many people would fall before and after you down to Hell. What would you do if your foot slips and your regret profits you not? Of a surety, you would wish you were not born in this world at all. If you do not believe in that, then, receive the news of your long stay in the company of the disbelievers in the deepest bottoms of Hell. If you believe in it, but are heedless of and indulgent in it, and do not get ready enough for it, then, what a great loss you would have. How should your faith avail you unless it stimulates you to seek the good pleasure of Allah Almighty by obeying Him and refraining from disobeying Him? Should you have

ahead of you no risk but that of the Sirat, then, it would suffice you for terror and horror.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The Sirat (a bridge) will be laid across Hell and I (Muhammad) shall be the first amongst the Apostles to cross it with my followers. Nobody except the Apostles will then be able to speak and their speech then would be: "O Allah! Save us. O Allah Save us." There will be hooks like the thorns of Sa'dan in Hell. Have you seen the thorns of Sa'dan?" The people said: "Yes." He said: "These hooks will be like the thorns of Sa'dan, but nobody except Allah knows their greatness in size and these will entangle the people according to their deeds." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The bridge will be laid across Hell. It is a slippery on which there are clamps and (Hooks like) a thorny seed that is wide at one side and narrow at the other and has thorns with bent ends. Such a thorny seed is found in Najd and is called As-Sa'dan. Some of the believers will cross the bridge as quickly as the wink of an eye, some others as quick as lightning, a strong wind, fast horses or she-camels; and some will pass walking, others crawling. So some will be safe without any harm; some will be safe after receiving some scratches, and some will fall down into Hell (Fire). The last person will cross by being dragged (over the bridge). As for the inhabitants of the fire who are doomed to abide therein forever: They would neither die nor live. Others (from among the Muslims) would be punished by their sins and mistakes, and burn until they would turn into coal before permission is given for intercession." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah would gather the foremost and the last generations of people for the appointment on a well-known day. They would keep standing for forty years, during which their sights would remain fixedly staring towards the sky, in expectation for the decision of cases..." and he mentioned the Hadith up to the time the believers would fall in prostration and then said: "Then, He would say to the believers: 'Raise your heads.' They would do accordingly, thereupon He would give them their light each according to his deeds: One of them would be given his light as much as a mountain running ahead of him, one would be given his light less than that, one would be given his light like a date-palm, and one would be given his light less than that, until the last of them would be given his light as little as is in proportion to his big toe, which illuminates once and vanishes once, and whenever it illuminates, he would walk, and whenever it darkens, he would stop from walking.

They would pass on the bridge according to their light: Some as quickly as the wink of an eye, some others as quick as lightning, a strong wind, fast horses or she-camels; and some will pass walking, until the one whose light is as little as in

proportion to his big toe would pass crawling on his face, legs and hands, dragging them hardly and with great difficulty, and during his walk, fire would affect his sides. He would continue as such until he is delivered and once he is delivered he would stand and say: 'All perfect praise be to Allah, Who has given me what He has given none other than me, as He has saved me from it after He had let me see it.' Then, he would be taken to a stream at the gate of Paradise in order to take bath." (Ibn Adi and Al-Hakim).

It is further narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "The Sirat is as sharp as a sword or a hair. Verily, the angels would rescue believing men and women; and Gabriel "peace be upon him" would keep taking hold of me while I would be saying: "O Lord! Save us! Save us!" on that day, these who would slip, from among men and women, would be a lot." (Al-Baihaqi and Ahmad).

The longer and deeper one meditates in the terrors of that Sirat in this world, the closer he would be to salvation in the hereafter. To be sure, Allah never combines two fears over a servant: whoever fears those terrors in this world would be safe from them in the hereafter. By fear, I do not mean to weep once you hear about it and soon forget it. But whoever fears a thing should necessarily flee away from it, and whoever wishes for a thing should petition it. so, nothing saves you but the fear that prevents you from disobedience of Allah Almighty, and stimulates you to obey Him as much as is within your capacity.

If you fail to be sincere in your fear, then, at least, be sincere in your love for the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", eagerness to honor his Sunan, longing for observing the hearts of the righteous among his Ummah, and seeking blessing with their invocations, perchance you would get a share of his or their intercession and be saved by its virtue.

CHAPTER NINE: ACCOUNT OF INTERCESSION

It should be known to you that if fire has become due on some people, from among Muslims, Allah Almighty might accept intercession for them from the Prophets and sincere lovers and affirmers of truth, and even the intercession of the righteous and religious scholars among their people. Whoever has a fortune of good with Allah Almighty in this world shall have a due share of intercession with Him in the hereafter for his family, friends, companions and acquaintances. So, be eager to obtain for yourself the rank of their intercession. This requires you not to look down upon anyone of mankind, whatever he might be, for Allah Almighty has hidden His alliance among His servants, and it may be that whomever you despise is an ally and friend of Allah Almighty, nor regard with slightness any sin, no matter how trivial it might be, for Allah Almighty has hidden His wrath and anger in those sins, and it may be that the wrath of Allah lies in the sin you render insignificant, nor underestimate any act of worship, for Allah Almighty has hidden His good pleasure in the acts of worship, and it may be that His good pleasure lies in the act of worship which you take too lightly.

There are many Qur'anic Holy Verses and Prophetic narrations in support of intercession. Allah Almighty said: "And soon will your Guardian-Lord give you

(that wherewith) you shall be well-pleased." (Ad-Duha 5)

﴿ وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰٓ ﴾

It is narrated on the authority of Amr Ibn Al-As "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited the statement of Allah on the tongue of Abraham "peace be upon him": "O my Lord! they have indeed led astray many among mankind; he then who follows my (ways) is of me, and he that disobeys me, but You are indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Ibrahim 36)

﴿ رَبِّ إِنَّهُنَّ أَضْلَلْنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ فَمَن تَبِعَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنِّى وَمَنْ عَصَانِى فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴾

And the statement of Allah on the tongue of Jesus "peace be upon him": "If You do punish them, they are Your servants: if You do forgive them, You are the Exalted in power, the Wise." (Al-Ma'idah 118)

﴿ إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴾

Then, he raised his hands towards the sky and said: "My Ummah! My Ummah!" Then, he went on weeping." Allah Almighty said to Gabriel "peace be upon him": "O Gabriel! Go and ask Muhammad what causes him to weep." Gabriel asked him and he told him, and Allah has better knowledge of him, thereupon He Almighty said to Gabriel: "O Gabriel! Go to Muhammad and tell him that 'We would please you concerning your Ummah, and never would we aggrieve you concerning them.' (Muslim on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-As, and not Amr Ibn Al-As himself).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I have been given five (things) which were not given to anyone before me: Every Prophet was sent to his own people in particular, and I have been sent to all people, red and black; the war booty has been made lawful for me, and it was never made lawful for anyone before me; the earth has been made sacred, pure and place of prayer for me, so whenever the time of the Prayer comes upon anyone of you, he should pray wherever he is; I have been given victory by terror, (cast in the hearts of the enemy) from a distance (as long as covered in) a month; and I have been given intercession (in the hereafter)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "When it is the Day of Judgement, I would be the imam and spokesman of Prophets, and the master of their intercession, and I do not (say that in order to) boast." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah; and Ibn Majah on the authority of Ubai Ibn Ka'b).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I would be the chief of mankind, of which I never boast; and I would be the first for whom the earth would split open to come out. I also would be the first intercessor and the first one whose intercession would be accepted. I would have the flag of praise in my hand, beneath which Adam and those behind him would be." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “Every Prophet has an invocation that should receive answer (from Allah Almighty) and (all the Prophets barring me utilized theirs, and) I like to keep my invocation in the form of intercession for my Ummah on the Day of Judgement.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas; and Muslim alone on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: “Pulpits of gold would be set up for the Prophets (on the Day of Judgement) to sit on, and mine would remain empty and I would not sit on it for I would keep standing erect in front of my Lord, for fear I would be sent to Paradise and my Ummah would remain behind after me. Then, I would say: “O Lord! My Ummah!” Allah Almighty would say: “O Muhammad! What do you like Me to do with your Ummah?” I would say: “O Lord! Hasten on their reckoning.” I would then keep interceding for them until I would be given written deeds to take out men who have already been sent to the fire (of Hell), (and they would be so much numerous) that Malik, the fire keeper would say to me: “O Muhammad! You have left none of your Ummah for the fire that is kindled out of wrath of your Lord.” (At-Tabarani).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: “ON the Day of Judgement, I would intercede for people more numerous than the stones and pebbles on the surface of the earth.” (Ahmad and At-Tabarani on the authority of Buraidah).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: Some (cooked) meat was brought to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and the meat of a forearm was presented to him as he used to like it. He took a morsel of it and said: “I will be the chief of all the people on the Day of Resurrection. Do you know the reason for it? Allah will gather all the human beings of early generations as well as late generations on one plain so that the announcer will be able to make them all hear his voice and the watcher will be able to see all of them. The sun will come so close to the people that they will suffer such distress and trouble as they will not be able to bear or stand.

Then the people will say: “Don't you see to what state you have reached? Won't you look for someone who can intercede for you with your Lord?” They will say to each other: “Go to Adam "peace be upon him".” So they will go to Adam and say to him: “You are the father of mankind; Allah created you with His Own Hand, and breathed into you of His Spirit (meaning the spirit which he created for you); and ordered the angels to prostrate before you; so (please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are? Don't you see what condition we have reached?” Adam will say: “Today my Lord has become angry as He has never become before, nor will ever become thereafter. He forbade me (to eat of the fruit of) the tree, but I disobeyed Him. Myself! Myself! Myself! (I am mainly concerned with my own problems). Go to someone else; go to Noah "peace be upon him".”

So they will go to Noah and say (to him): "O Noah! You are the first (of Allah's Messengers) to the people of the earth, and Allah has named you a thankful slave; please intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are?" He will say: "Today my Lord has become angry as He has never become nor will ever become thereafter. I had (in the world) the right to make one definitely accepted invocation, and I made it against my nation. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Abraham "peace be upon him"."

They will go to Abraham and say: "O Abraham! You are The Messenger of Allah and His intimate friend from among the people of the earth; so please intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are?" He will say to them: "My Lord has today become angry as He has never become before, nor will ever become thereafter. I had told three lies (Abu Hayyan (the sub-narrator) mentioned them in the Hadith) Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Moses "peace be upon him"."

The people will then go to Moses and say: "O Moses! You are The Messenger of Allah and Allah gave you superiority above the others with this message and with His direct Talk to you; (please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are?" Moses will say: "My Lord has today become angry as He has never become before, nor will become thereafter. I killed a person whom I had not been ordered to kill. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Jesus "peace be upon him"."

So they will go to Jesus and say: "O Jesus! You are The Messenger of Allah and His Word which He sent to Mary, and a superior soul created by Him, and you talked to the people while still young in the cradle. Please intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are?" Jesus will say: "My Lord has today become angry as He has never become before nor will ever become thereafter." Jesus will not mention any sin, but will say: "Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else; go to Muhammad "peace be upon him"."

So they will come to me and say: "O Muhammad ! You are The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and the last of The Prophets, and Allah forgave your earlier and later sins. (Please) intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see in what state we are?"

The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" added: "Then I will go beneath Allah's Throne and fall in prostration before my Lord. And then Allah will guide me to such praises and glorifications to Him as He has never guided anybody else before me. Then it will be said: "O Muhammad! Raise your head. Ask, and you will be granted (what you ask for). Intercede and It (your intercession) will be accepted." So I will raise my head and Say: "My Ummah, O my Lord! My Ummah, O my Lord." It will be said: "O Muhammad! Let those of your Ummah, who have no reckoning, enter through such a gate of the gates of Paradise as lies on the right; and they will share the other gates with the people." The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, the distance between every two gate-posts of Paradise is like the distance between Mecca and Himyar (in Yemen) or Mecca and Busra (in Sham)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

That is the intercession of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". The righteous and religious scholars among his Ummah also will have their portion of intercession, of which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The intercession of a man from among my Ummah would admit people to Paradise more numerous than (the tribes of) Rabie'ah and Mudar." (Al-Iraqi on the authority of Abu Umamah, and the people thought the man intended is Uthman Ibn Affan "Allah be pleased with him"; and Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Abu Al-Jud'a, in which both tribes are replaced with Tamim).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "(On the Day of Judgement) it would be said to a man (from among my Ummah): "O so and so! Stand and intercede (for your people)." He would stand and intercede: (one for as much as) his tribe, (another for) his household, (another for) only one or two men, and so on, each according to his deed." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id "Allah be pleased with him").

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, a man from among the inhabitants of Paradise would look at the denizens of fire, and a man from among the denizens of fire would call him: "O so and so! Do you recognize me?" He would say: "No, by Allah, I do not recognize you. Who are you?" He would say: "I am the one upon whom you came one day, when you were in the world, and asked for a sip of water, and I watered you." He would say: "Ah! I have recognized you." He would say: "Then, intercede, by it, for me with your Lord Almighty." He then would say to Allah Almighty: "I have indeed looked at the denizens of fire, and a man from among the denizens of fire called me: "O so and so! Do you recognize me?" I said: "No, by Allah, I do not recognize you. Who are you?" He said: "I am the one whom you asked for a sip of water in the world one day, and I watered you." I said: "Ah! I have recognized you." He said: "Then, intercede, by it, for me with your Lord Almighty." So, please, accept my intercession for him." Allah would accept his intercession for him, and he would be ordered to come out of the fire." (Abu Mansur Ad-Dailami).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I would be the first of people to come out (of the grave) when they are raised; their spokesman when they come (to their Lord); who would give them glad tidings when they despair. On that day, the flag of praise would be in my hand; and I would be the most honored, from among the offspring of Adam, in the Sight of my Lord and I do not (say so in order to) boast." (At-Tirmidhi)

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I would stand in front of my Lord Almighty (on the Day of Judgement), thereupon I would be dressed in one of the dresses of Paradise. Then, I would stand on the right side of the Throne (of Majesty), and none of the creatures would ever be in that standing other than me." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him").

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: Some people from among the companions of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" sat in expectation for him. Then, he came out and when he was close to them he heard them speaking. He heard their talk. One of them said: "Wonder! Allah Almighty has taken one of His creatures as an intimate friend. He Almighty has taken Abraham "peace be upon him" as an intimate friend." Another said: "More amazing is His direct talk to Moses "peace be upon him"." A third said: "Jesus "peace be upon him" is the Word and Spirit of Allah Almighty." A fourth said: "Adam "peace be upon him" was also chosen by Allah." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out to them and greeted them with peace and said: "I have heard your speech. You admire the fact that Abraham is the intimate friend of Allah, and that is true; that Moses is the one to whom Allah spoke directly, and that is true; that Jesus is the Spirit and Word of Allah Almighty, and that is true; and that Adam was chosen by Allah Almighty, and that is true. Behold! I am the beloved of Allah Almighty, because of which I never boast; and I would be the carrier of the flag of praise on the Day of Judgement, because of which I never boast; and I would be the first intercessor and the first one whose intercession would be accepted on the Day of Judgement, because of which I never boast; and I would be the first to move the ring of the gate of Paradise, and it would be opened to me by Allah to enter along with the poor from among the believers, because of which I never boast; and I am the most honored of the foremost and last generations, because of which I never boast." (At-Tirmidhi).

CHAPTER TEN
ACCOUNT OF THE FOUNTAIN

It should be known to you that the Fountain (Hawd) is a great privilege therewith the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" is favored from among all the Prophets and Messengers. There are a lot of narrations in its description. We hope that Allah should endow us with its knowledge in this world, and taste in the hereafter. Characteristic of it is that whoever drinks of it would never become thirsty.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: One day The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was sitting among us when he slumbered (for a while) after which he then raised his head while smiling. We asked: "What does cause you to smile, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "A Surah has just been revealed to me." He then recited: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Verily We have given you the Fount of Abundance. Therefore turn to your Lord for the Prayer and offer sacrifice, and surely your enemy is cut off (from goodness)." (Al-Kawthar 1-3)

﴿ إِنَّآ أَعۡطَيۡنَٰكَ ٱلۡكَوۡثَرَ ۝ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَٱنۡحَرۡ ۝ إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ ٱلۡأَبۡتَرُ ۝ ﴾

Then he (the Prophet) asked: "Do you know what the Fount of Abundance is?" We said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "It is a river, my Lord "Exalted and

Glorified be He" has promised me, in which there is an abundance of goodness. It is a fount, to which my followers would come on the Day of Judgement. Its utensils would be as numerous as the stars. A certain slave (of my followers) would be turned away from it, and I would say: "O My Lord! He is one of my followers!" He (Allah) would reply: "You don't know what he innovated (of bad things in religion) after you."" (Muslim).

It is further narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "While I was walking in Paradise behold! I saw a river whose edges are of hollow pearl domes. I said: "What is that O Gabriel?" he said: "That is (the river of) Kawthar which your Lord has given you." The angel then struck with his hand and behold! Its mud was of yellow musk." (At-Tirmidhi).

It is further narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say: "(The distance) between both banks of my Fountain is (as long as) what is between Medina and San'a, (or what is between Medina and Amman)." (Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: When it was revealed: "Verily We have given you the Fount of Abundance", the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "It is a river in Paradise, whose edges are of gold, and drink whiter than milk, sweeter than honey and more pleasant than musk, flowing on rocks of pearl and coral." (At-Tirmidhi and Ad-Darimi).

It is narrated on the authority of Thawban "Allah be pleased with him", the freed slave of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "(The width of) my Fountain will be (as long as the distance) between Aden and Ailah, (whose water is) whiter than milk and sweeter than honey, and whose cups are (as numerous) as the number of the stars. Whoever has even a sip of it will never become thirsty. The first to come upon me will be the poor Emigrants." Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Who are those O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Those are of untidy garments and unkempt hair, who never marry the blissful women, nor the closed gates (of rulers and chiefs) are opened to them." On that Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz went on weeping until his beard was wetted, and then he said: "But, I've married the blissful women (i.e. Fatimah Bint Abd-Al-Malik), and the closed gates (of the rulers and chiefs) are opened to me. Anyway, I do not wash my garment which is on my body until it becomes dirty, nor do I oil (and comb) my hair until it becomes unkempt." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: I said: "O Messenger of Allah! What about the utensils of the Fountain?" He said: "By Him in Whose Hand is the life of Muhammad! Its utensils would be more numerous than the stars in the sky, with its planets shining on a dark cloudless night. They would be the utensils of Paradise. Whoever drinks from this (Fount) would never feel thirsty. Two spouts from

Paradise would flow in it and whoever drinks from it would never feel thirsty. Moreover, its breadth is equal to its length (and it is as large as) the distance between Amman and Ailah. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey." (Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Samurah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Prophet "peace be upon him" said: "Each Prophet will have a fount (in the hereafter), and they will vie in glory with each other, as to which of them will have the greatest number of followers come to drink from his fountain, and I hope to have the greatest number of followers come to drink from mine." (At-Tirmidhi).

That is the expectation of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". So, let every servant hope to be among these who will come upon his Fountain, and beware of being deceived by his hope without doing the necessary work that helps him realize it. Of a surety, to hope for the harvest, you should first do the cultivation and strive your best to look after it. but unfortunately, most people, out of haughtiness and conceit, hope for the harvest even without doing the necessary measures they should do for their plants to grow in the land. We seek refuge with Allah Almighty from haughtiness and conceit. Allah Almighty said: "O men! certainly the promise of Allah is true. Let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the Chief Deceiver deceive you about Allah." (Fatir 5)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَاۖ وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلۡغَرُورُ ﴾

CHAPTER ELEVEN
ACCOUNT OF HELL, ITS TERRORS AND CHAINS

O one who is heedless of his own self, and deceived by the worldly benefits which are going to vanish, no matter how long they endure! Refrain from engagement in that which you are going to leave, and rather meditate in that which you should imperatively come to, i.e. the fire of Hell, upon which all the creatures would inevitably come in realization of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Not one of you there is, but he shall go down to it: That for your lord is a thing decreed, determined. Then we shall deliver those that were god-fearing: and the evil doers we shall leave there, hobbling on their knees." (Maryam 71:72)

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمۡ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَاۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتۡمٗا مَّقۡضِيّٗا ﴿٧١﴾ ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَواْ وَّنَذَرُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيّٗا ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

You are certain of coming upon Hell, and uncertain of salvation from it. so, bring in your heart the terror of that coming, perchance you would get ready for salvation from it.

Furthermore, meditate your state in the hereafter, while standing in expectation of your destiny after being reckoned and questioned, then, the sinners would be encircled by Hell, with its darkness of many layers, and overwhelmed by fire of fierce blaze, and overtaken by its heaving of sighs and sobs, out of extreme fury and rage. At that time, the sinners would come to know that their portion is destruction and perdition. Then the angel would

come to call them one by one, and drive him to be thrown, while chained in fetters and bonds, into the fire, saying to him: "Taste you (this)! truly was you mighty, full of honour! Truly this is what you used to doubt!" (Ad-Dukhan 49-50)

﴿ ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْكَرِيمُ ۝ إِنَّ هَـٰذَا مَا كُنتُم بِهِۦ تَمْتَرُونَ ۝ ﴾

Their abode therein would be narrow and dark, their drink boiling fetid water. Such being the case, they would call from its different sides and parts: "O Malik! would that your Lord put an end to us!" He will say, "Nay, but you shall abide!" (Az-Zukhruf 77)

﴿ وَنَادَوْا۟ يَـٰمَـٰلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنَّكُم مَّـٰكِثُونَ ۝ ﴾

At that point, they would despair and lose all hope to come out of the fire of Hell, or to receive a portion of the mercy of Allah Almighty. They would regret for what they wasted in this world concerning the rights of Allah Almighty. But of no profit would it be to them to regret. In no way could regret save or even avail them in the least: on the contrary, they would be turned over their faces with fire above them, fire beneath them, fire on their right and fire on their left. They indeed would be sunk in fire: Their food would be fire, their drink fire, their clothing fire, and their beds also fire. Add to all of that their being bound in fetters and chains of heavy and strong iron: In addition there will be maces of iron (to punish) them. Every time they wish to get away therefrom, from anguish, they will be forced back therein, and (it will be said), "Taste you the Penalty of Burning!" every time their skin would be roasted through, it would be replaced with fresh skin in order for the torment of burning to start once gain. furthermore, the tree of Zaqqum will be the food of the Sinful, Like molten brass; it will boil in their insides, Like the boiling of scalding water. They would hope for death, but they would taste no death in order for their punishment to continue everlastingly

That is a brief illustration of the state of the disbelievers who would abide in the fire of Hell forever. Consider now the Hell and its immense valleys and bottomless defiles. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "In Hell, there are seventy thousand valleys, each of which contains seventy thousand defiles, each of which has seventy thousand snakes and scorpions, and there would be neither a disbeliever nor a hypocrite but that he would be confronted with all of those."

It is narrated on the authority of Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Seek refuge with Allah from the spring or valley of grief." They asked: "O Messenger of Allah! What is the valley of grief?" he said: "It is a valley in Hell from which the Hell itself seeks refuge with Allah Almighty seventy times everyday: it is prepared by Allah Almighty for the showy reciters (who recite Qur'an only in order to be seen of men)." (Ibn Adi, Abu Na'im, At-Tirmidhi; and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

The valleys and defiles of Hell are as much as is equal to the number of worldly desires, and its seven gates are equal to the seven organs therewith the

servant disobeys Allah and commits sins. The highest of them is Hell, and the lowest is the bottomless pit. It is as bottomless as are the desires and delights of this world. As well as no desire in this world ends but to another one that is stronger, similarly, no pit in Hell ends but to another which is more bottomless.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We were in the company of The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when we heard a terrible sound. Thereupon The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Do you know what (sound) is this?" We said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He "peace be upon him" said: "That is a stone, which was thrown in Hell seventy years ago and it has been constantly slipping down and now it has reached its base." (Muslim).

Then, reflect on its different grades: As well as the people differ in their devotion to this world, each according to his portion thereof, the punishment they would receive in the fire of Hell also would be different accordingly. That is because Allah Almighty never deals unjustly with anyone even in the least. The fire would not affect all of them equally: each would have his punishment according to his disobedience. But the one who would receive the least punishment would be so much suffering that were the world with all what it contains to be offered to him, he would ransom himself for it.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The one who would receive the least punishment from among the people on the Day of Judgement would put on a pair of sandals of fire, from whose heat his brain would be boiling." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of An-Nu'man Ibn Bashir "Allah be pleased with him").

On the other hand, compare not the fire of this world with that of the hereafter. It is reported that the fire of this world ahs been diluted with the water of mercy seventy times in order for the inhabitants of this world to endure. (Ibn Abd-Al-Barr on the authority of Ibn Abbas).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Allah Almighty ordered that fire be kindled for one thousand years until it turned red. Then, He commanded that it be kindled for further one thousand years until it turned white. Then, He commanded that it be kindled for one thousand years until it turned black. It is then black and dark."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The fire of Hell complained to its Lord saying: "O Lord! My parts are eating (destroying) one another." So Allah allowed it to take two breaths, one in the winter and the other in the summer. The breath in the summer is at the time when you feel the severest heat and the breath in the winter is at the time when you feel the severest cold." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him").

It is reported on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: "(On the Day of Judgement) the most comforted among the disbelievers in this world would be brought and ordered that he be dipped only once in the fire.

Then it would be said to him: "Have you ever experienced any bliss?" He would answered in the negative. Similarly, the one who received the severest hardship in this world would be brought and ordered that he be dipped only once in Paradise. Then he would be asked: "Have you ever experienced any hardship?" he would answer in the negative."

Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" said: "if there are as many as one hundred thousand people in the mosque, an then, one from among the denizens of the fire takes only one breath, all of them would die immediately."

After that, consider the stench of the pus that would flow from their bodies until they would sink in it. That is the dark, murky, intensely cold fluid. In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Were only a single bucket of the dark, murky, intensely cold fluid of Hell to be poured over this world, it would make stinking all the inhabitants of the earth." (At-Tirmidhi).

That would be their drink whenever the thirsty among them asks for drink: "for the wrong-doers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the wall and roof of a tent, will hem them in: If they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces: How dreadful the drink! how uncomfortable a couch to recline on!" (Al-Kahf 29)

﴿ وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُواْ يُغَاثُواْ بِمَآءٍ كَٱلْمُهْلِ يَشْوِى ٱلْوُجُوهَ ۚ بِئْسَ ٱلشَّرَابُ وَسَآءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾

Then, think about their food, which would be of Zaqqum tree as confirmed by the statement of Allah Almighty: "You will surely taste of the Tree of Zaqqum. Then will you fill your insides therewith, And drink Boiling Water on top of it: Indeed you shall drink like diseased camels raging with thirst!" (Al-Waqi'ah 52-55)

﴿ لَآكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنْهَا ٱلْبُطُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَشَٰرِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَشَٰرِبُونَ شُرْبَ ٱلْهِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾

And: "Is that the better entertainment or the Tree of Zaqqum? For We have truly made it (as) a trial for the wrong-doers. For it is a tree that springs out of the bottom of Hell-fire: The shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devils: Truly they will eat thereof and fill their bellies therewith. Then on top of that they will be given a mixture made of boiling water. Then shall their return be to the (Blazing) Fire." (As-Saffat 62-68)

﴿ أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ نُّزُلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ ٱلزَّقُّومِ ﴿٦٢﴾ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَٰهَا فِتْنَةً لِّلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِىٓ أَصْلِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٦٤﴾ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُۥ رُءُوسُ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ﴿٦٥﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَآكِلُونَ مِنْهَا فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنْهَا ٱلْبُطُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرْجِعَهُمْ لَإِلَى ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

And: "The while they enter the Blazing Fire, The while they are given to drink, of a boiling hot spring, No food will there be for them but a bitter Dari Which will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger." (Al-Ghashiyah 4-7)

﴿ تَصْلَىٰ نَارًا حَامِيَةً ﴿٤﴾ تُسْقَىٰ مِنْ عَيْنٍ ءَانِيَةٍ ﴿٥﴾ لَّيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِن ضَرِيعٍ ﴿٦﴾ لَّا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِى مِن جُوعٍ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

And: "With Us are Fetters (to bind them), and a Fire (to burn them), And a Food that chokes, and a Penalty Grievous." (Al-Muzzammil 12-13)

﴿ إِنَّ لَدَيْنَآ أَنكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

It is reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Were only a single drop of Zaqqum tree to fall on the oceans of the earth, it would putrefy the living of all the inhabitants of the earth." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah). That is the effect of only a single drop: then, what do you think of him whose entire food consists of that tree, and drink of the stinking pus and dark murky rotten fluid?

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Have longing for that to which Allah Almighty exhorted you (i.e. Paradise), and beware and fear of that of which He Almighty frightened you, i.e. of His torment and punishment and of Hell: For indeed, were only a single drop of Paradise to be with you in this world in which you are, it would have made it pleasant for you; and were only a single drop of the fire (of Hell) to be with you in this world in which you are, it would have putrefied it for you."

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The denizens of fire (of Hell) would be given to severe hunger equal to the torment which they would suffer from fire, thereupon they would ask for food, thereupon they would be served with food from Dari which neither nourishes nor satisfies their hunger. They would then ask for another kind of food and they would be served with food that chokes. They would remember how they used to remove the choke in the world with drink over it. they would then ask for drink, thereupon they would be served with drink of fetid boiling water raised to them on hooks of iron: Whenever it becomes close to their faces, it would roast them, and whenever it enters into their bellies, it would cut their bowels. They would say: "Invite the keepers of Hell." Those in the Fire will say to the Keepers of Hell: "Pray to your Lord to lighten us the Penalty for a Day (at least)!" They will say: "Did there not come to you your Messengers with Clear Signs?" They will say: "Yes." They will reply, "Then pray (as you like)! but the Prayer of those without Faith is nothing but (futile wandering) in (mazes of) error!" (Ghafir 49-50)

﴿ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى ٱلنَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ جَهَنَّمَ ٱدْعُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِّنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ أَوَلَمْ تَكُ تَأْتِيكُمْ رُسُلُكُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ۖ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ ۚ قَالُوا۟ فَٱدْعُوا۟ ۗ وَمَا دُعَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾

Then, they would talk to each other to invite Malik to whom they would say: "O Malik! would that your Lord put an end to us!" he will say, "Nay, but you shall abide!" (Az-Zukhruf 77)

﴿ إِنَّكُم مَّٰكِثُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ﴾

(At-Tirmidhi and Ad-Darimi).

It is said that the period between their calling of Malik and his response to

them would be one thousand years. They then would say: "Invoke your Lord Almighty. There is none better for you than your Lord." They will say: "Our Lord! our misfortune overwhelmed us, and we became a people astray! Our Lord! bring us out of this: If ever we return (to evil), then shall we be wrong-doers indeed!" He will say: "Be you driven into it (with ignominy)! and speak you not to Me!" (Al-Mu'minun 106-108)

﴿ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ قَالَ اخْسَئُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾ ﴾

At that time, they would despair and lose hope for every kind of good.

It is reported on the authority of Abu Umamah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said in comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "and he is given for drink, boiling fetid water, In gulps will he sip it, but never will he be near swallowing it down his throat" (Ibrahim 15-16)

﴿ وَاسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ ﴿١٥﴾ مِّن وَرَائِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَىٰ مِن مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

"Such would be brought near him, but he would detest it. once it is brought near him, it roasts his face, and his scalp falls down,. If he drinks it, it would cut his bowels and come out of his anus. In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty says: "They would be given, to drink, boiling water, so that it cuts up their bowels (to pieces)" (Muhammad 15)

﴿ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

He Almighty further says: "if they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces: How dreadful the drink!" (Al-Kahf 29)

﴿ وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ ۚ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾

That would be their food and drink whenever they would grow hungry and thirsty." (At-Tirmidhi).

Then, consider the Hell's female-snakes, serpents, scorpions, and their like, which would not cease to bite even for a single moment:

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever is made wealthy by Allah and does not pay the Zakat that is due on his wealth, then on the Day of Resurrection his wealth will be made like a baldheaded poisonous male snake with two black spots over the eyes. The snake will encircle his neck and bite his cheeks and say: "I am your wealth, I am your treasure." "Then The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited: "And let not those who covetously withhold of the gifts which Allah has given them of His Grace, think that it is good for them: nay, it will be the worse for them; soon shall the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks like a twisted collar, on the Day of Judgment." (Al Imran 180)

﴿ وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۖ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ۖ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ﴾

(Al-Bukhari; and Muslim on the authority of Jabir).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "In the fire (of Hell) there would be female-snakes as huge as the necks of Bukht camels: if they bite anyone, he would continue to feel its harmful effect for as long as forty years. There would be also scorpions as huge as mules: if they bite anyone, he would continue to feel its harmful effect for as long as forty years. Those serpents and scorpions would be directed over such as possessed in this world by niggardliness, bad manners and harming people. Whoever is saved from those evils, would be saved from those serpents and scorpions." (Ahmad on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Al-Harith).

Then, consider after that how Allah Almighty would increase the size of the bodies of the denizens of fire, in length and breadth, in order for their punishment to multiply for them, and the pain they receive from the taste of fire and the bites of serpents and scorpions to become more severe.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The molar tooth of the disbeliever in the fire (of Hell) would be as huge as (the mountain of) Uhud, and the thickness of his skin as long as is equal to a three-day journey." (Muslim).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "His (the disbeliever's) lower lip would be falling, (as huge as to coat) on his breast, and his upper lip raised (as huge as to) cover his face." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Indeed, on the Day of Judgement, the disbeliever would be dragging his tongue (which would be so long) that the people would trample it (with their feet)." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Ibn Umar).

In his comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "as often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the Penalty" (An-Nisa' 56)

﴿ كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُم بَدَّلْنَـٰهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۗ ﴾

Al-Hassan said: "They would be devoured by the fire seventy thousand times everyday, and every time it eats them, it would be said to them: "Return", and they would return to their original state in which they were."

Then, consider the state of weeping, wailing, sighs and sobs of the denizens of Hell once they would be throne into the fire, and their invocation of woes and perdition on themselves:

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "(On the Day of Judgement) Hell would be brought, having seventy thousand reins, each of which would be held by seventy thousand angels." (Muslim on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him").

It is narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The weeping for the denizens of the fire (of Hell) will be set, thereupon they will go on weeping until tears cease; and then they will go on weeping blood until it becomes like furrows on their faces that if ships are made to run in them, it would run. As long as they are permitted to weep in sighs and sobs, and invoke woes and perdition upon themselves, they would find relief in it. but even this would be forbidden to them." (Ibn Majah).

According to Muhammad Ibn Ka'b: "The denizens of fire will have five invocations, four of which would receive answer from Allah Almighty , and when it is the fifth, they would be prevented from speech. They will say: "Our Lord! twice have You made us without life, and twice have You given us Life! now have we recognized our sins: is there any way out (of this)?" (The answer will be:) "This is because, when Allah was invoked as the Only (object of worship), you did reject Faith, but when partners were joined to Him, you believed! the Command is with Allah, Most High, Most Great!" (Ghafir 11-12)

﴿ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَمَتَّنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَىٰ خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ (11) ذَٰلِكُم بِأَنَّهُ إِذَا دُعِيَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ كَفَرْتُمْ ۖ وَإِن يُشْرَكْ بِهِ تُؤْمِنُوا ۚ فَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْكَبِيرِ (12) ﴾

They will say: "Our Lord! respite us (if only) for a short Term: We will answer Your Call, and follow the Messengers!" "What! were you not wont to swear aforetime that you should suffer no decline?" (Ibrahim 44)

﴿ رَبَّنَا أَخِّرْنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ نُّجِبْ دَعْوَتَكَ وَنَتَّبِعِ الرُّسُلَ ۗ أَوَلَمْ تَكُونُوا أَقْسَمْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ مَا لَكُم مِّن زَوَالٍ (44) ﴾

They will say: "Our Lord! bring us out: we shall work righteousness, not the (deeds) we used to do!", (The answer will be) "Did we not give you long enough life so that he that would should receive admonition? And (moreover) the warner came to you. So taste you (the fruits of your deeds): for the Wrong-doers there is no helper." (Fatir 37)

﴿ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ ۖ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ (37) ﴾

They will say: "Our Lord! our misfortune overwhelmed us, and we became a people astray! Our Lord! bring us out of this: if ever we return (to evil), then shall we be wrong-doers indeed!" He will say: "Be you driven into it (with ignominy)! and speak you not to Me!" (Al-Mu'minun 106-108)

﴿ قَالَ اخْسَئُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ (108) ﴾

After that, they will never speak.

In comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "to us it makes no difference (now) whether we rage, or bear (these torments) with patience: for ourselves there is no way of escape" (Ibrahim 21)

﴿ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجَزِعْنَا أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِن مَّحِيصٍ (21) ﴾

Zaid Ibn Aslam said: "They would keep patient for one hundred years, after

which they would remain in rage for one hundred years. Then, they would keep patient for one hundred years. Then, they would say: "To us it makes no difference (now) whether we rage, or bear (these torments) with patience."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Resurrection, Death will be brought forward in the shape of a black and white ram. Then a call maker will call: 'O people of Paradise!' Thereupon they will stretch their necks and look carefully. The caller will say: 'Do you know this?' They will say: 'Yes, this is Death.' By then all of them will have seen it. Then it will be announced again: 'O people of Hell !' They will stretch their necks and look carefully. The caller will say: 'Do you know this?' They will say: 'Yes, this is Death.' And by then all of them will have seen it. Then it (that ram) will be slaughtered and the caller will say: "O people of Paradise! Let it be eternity for you and no death! O people of Hell! Let it be eternity for you and no death!"" (Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Sa'id).

According to Al-Hassan: "A man will come out of the fire after one thousand years, and would that I be this man!" on another occasion, he was seen weeping, and when he was asked about the reason for that he said: "I fear I would be thrown into the fire and left with no care."

Those are the terrors and horrors of the fire of Hell. The most severe thing its denizens would receive, along with their punishment and torment, is their great regret in sigh for what they have wasted of the bliss of Paradise, and of the meeting with Allah Almighty, and His good pleasure, given that they have sold all of this for a little price, no more than worldly despicable and perishable short-lived desires, which were, anyway, not pure for them in so much as contaminated with evil and harm. Their regret would increase when they witness Paradise with its pleasures and bliss: Were they not to see it, surely, their grief in sigh for losing it would not be much more as it would really be for it would be shown to them.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, a people from among the denizens of fire would be brought to Paradise until when they come near it, detect its smell, and see its palaces and the bliss prepared by Allah Almighty for its inhabitants, it would be called: "Turn them away from it, for they have no portion in it." They would return with sigh the like of which neither the foremost nor the last generations have ever experienced. They would say: "O our Lord! Had You admitted us to the fire (of Hell) before You have shown to us Your reward and the good things You have prepared for Your allies, surely, it would have been easier on us." He Almighty would say to them: "But it is that which I have intended for you. (When you were in the world) whenever you were alone, you would contend Me, and whenever you met people, you would seem devoutly pious, in order to be seen of men, while your hearts had enmity towards Me. You feared the people and feared Me not, venerated the people and venerated Me not, left evil for the sake of people, and left nothing for My Sake. Today, I would let you taste the painful punishment, along with the enduring reward I have forbidden to you." (Al-Iraqi on the authority of Anas).

According to Ahmad Ibn Harb: "Should anyone of us prefer shade to sun (in this world) and would not prefer Paradise to the fire (in the hereafter)?"

It should be known to you that Allah Almighty created the fire with its

terrors and horrors, and created men for it who would neither increase nor decrease: that has been decreed and decided by Allah as confirmed in His statement: "But warn them of the Day of Distress, when the matter will be determined: for (behold,) they are negligent and they do not believe!" (Maryam 39)

﴿ وَأَنذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ وَهُمْ فِى غَفْلَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

In order to know that you are on the right, given the preordained fate, you should know that there is a sign indicative of that, which represents in the deeds you do in the world, on the basis of the fact that everyone is made to find it easy that for which he is created.

It is narrated on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We were accompanying a funeral procession in Baqi Gharqad. The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came to us and sat and we sat around him. He had a small stick in his hand. Then he bent his head and started scraping the ground with it. He then said: "There is none among you, and not a created soul, but has a place either in Paradise or in Hell assigned for him. It is also determined for him whether he will be among the blessed or wretched." A man said: "O Allah's Apostle! Should we not depend on what has been written for us and leave the deeds as whoever amongst us is blessed will do the deeds of a blessed person and whoever amongst us will be wretched, will do the deeds of a wretched person?" The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The blessed is to be directed to the good deeds, and the wretched is to be guided to the bad deeds." Then he recited the Verses: "So he who gives (in Charity) and fears (Allah), And (in all sincerity) testifies to the Best, We will indeed make smooth for him the path to Bliss. But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself Self-Sufficient, And gives the lie to the Best, We will indeed make smooth for him the Path to Misery." (Al-Lail 5:10) (Al-Bukhari)

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَٱتَّقَىٰ ۞ وَصَدَّقَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۞ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ۞ وَأَمَّا مَنۢ بَخِلَ وَٱسْتَغْنَىٰ ۞ وَكَذَّبَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۞ فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْعُسْرَىٰ ۞ ﴾

If the way to good has been made easy for you, receive then the glad tidings that you would be far from the fire of Hell. But if you do not intend good but that obstacles stand in the way to avert you from it, and you do not intend evil but that it is made easy on you to do, then, you should know then that you are given to destruction. The signification of that to the consequence is like the signification of the rain to the plants. Allah Almighty said: "As for the Righteous, they will be in Bliss; And the Wicked; they will be in the Fire." (Al-Infitar 13-14)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ۞ وَإِنَّ ٱلْفُجَّارَ لَفِى جَحِيمٍ ۞ ﴾

So, measure your states and deeds on those Two Holy Verses, perchance you would know your residence in either of both abodes; and Allah knows best.

CHAPTER TWELVE
ACCOUNT OF PARADISE AND ITS BLISS

It should be known to you that in opposition to the abode whose terrors,

horrors, distresses and anxieties you have learnt, i.e. the fire of Hell, there is another one, full of bliss, pleasures and delights, i.e. Paradise. Of a surety, if one is kept far from one of them, he should, necessarily and inevitably, reside in the other. So, stimulate fear in your heart by long meditation in the terrors and horrors of fire, and stimulate the hope in your heart by long meditation in the pleasures and delights of Paradise. Drive yourself with the lash of fear, and, at the same time, lead it with the rein of hope to the straight path, perchance you would attain the great felicity and be saved from the painful torment.

Think about the inhabitants of Paradise, in whose faces there would be the beaming brightness of bliss, and they would be given their drink from sealed nectar, while sitting on pulpits of rubies in pavilions of tender white pearl, having carpets of green rich brocade. They would be reclining on green Cushions on banks of rivers filled with wine and honey, surrounded by beautiful youth and decked with pretty houris of big lustrious eyes, as beautiful as if they were rubies and coral, whom neither a man nor a jinn has ever approached, walking across the different sides of the gardens of Paradise: if anyone of them struts in her walk, the sides of her dress would be carried by seventy thousand of beautiful youth. They would have of kinds of good rich white silk what amazes eyes and astounds sights. They would be adorned with crowns, decked with pearl and coral. They would be far from old age and trouble, restrained in pavilions, in palaces of rubies, built in the middle of the gardens of Paradise. They would also be restraining their glances (to their men), And round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness): If you see them, you would think them scattered Pearls; And when you look, it is there you will see a Bliss and a Realm Magnificent. They would serve them With goblets, (shining) beakers, and cups (filled) out of Clear-flowing fountains: a source of pleasure for those who drink. That would be in reward for what they used to do. They would be in well-guarded standing, in gardens and springs of inexhaustible drink, in gardens and rivers, an Assembly of Truth, in the Presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent. In them, they would look at the Countenance of the Bounteous Sovereign, with their faces rising and shining by virtue of the beaming brightness of bliss: Neither suffering nor humiliation would then fatigue them, for they would be honored servants. They would be given all kinds of gifts from their Lord Almighty. They would abide forever in that which their souls desire, in which they would neither fear nor grieve, safe from the evils of death. They would be blessed in it, eating of its food and fruits, drinking of its rivers and springs, wine, honey and milk. Its rivers would have their floor of silver, gravel of coral, and dust of yellow musk; and its plant would be of saffron. And amongst them will be passed round vessels of silver and goblets of crystal, Crystal-clear, made of silver: They will determine the measure thereof (according to their wishes). And they will be given to drink there of a Cup (of Wine) mixed with Zanjabil, A fountain there, called Salsabil. They would be also served And with fruits, any that they may select; And the flesh of fowls, any that they may desire. And (there will be) Companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes, Like unto Pearls well-guarded. A Reward for the Deeds of their past (Life). No frivolity will they hear therein, nor any taint of ill, Only the saying, "Peace! Peace."

Wonder at him who believes in an abode of such characteristics, in which

there would ever be no death, nor change to befall its inhabitants, and then gets affable with a perishable abode in which he is exposed to evil, harm, vicissitudes of fate and in the end death would snatch him! By Allah, if there would be in that abode of eternity nothing more than the soundness of bodies along with the safety from death, hunger and drink, it would be worthy to make one leave the world with all its benefits for it. Why not, given that its inhabitants would be safe kings, enjoy of all kinds of pleasures and delights, and have all they desire for, attending everyday to the courtyard of the Throne of Majesty, in order to look at the Countenance of Allah, the Most Bounteous?

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri and Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with both" that they said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There would be an announcer (in Paradise) who would make this announcement: 'Verily, there is in store for you to be in (everlasting) health after which you should never fall ill, to live (forever) after which you should not die, to remain youth after which you should never grow old, And to live in affluent circumstances after which you would never become destitute." That is the significance of the statement of Allah Almighty: "Behold! the Garden before you! you have been made its inheritors, for your deeds (of righteousness)." (Al-A'raf 43) (Muslim).

﴿ تِلْكُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةُ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

If you like to know the description of Paradise, you should then recite the Qur'an, for there is no speech more eloquent, more expressive than it. recite both Surahs of Ar-Rahman and Al-Waqi'ah, and the other Surahs which tell about that. But if you like to know its characteristics and attributes in detail from the narrations and traditions, below is a set of them:

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Qais that eh said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Two gardens, the utensils and the contents of which are of silver, and two other gardens, the utensils and contents of which are of gold. Nothing will prevent the people who will be in the Garden of Eden from seeing their Lord except the curtain of Majesty over His Face." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Consider then the gates of Paradise: They are as numerous as the acts of worship, just as the gates of Hell are so in proportion to the number of sins.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: Allah's Apostle "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever gives a pair (of things or property) in charity for Allah's Cause, will be called from the gates of Paradise, and Paradise has eight gates. He will be addressed: "O servant of Allah! That (gate) is better (for you, so come and enter through it)." So, whoever was amongst the people who used to offer their prayers, will be called from the gate of the prayer; whoever was amongst the people who used to participate in Jihad, will be called from the gate of Jihad; whoever was amongst those who used to give in charity, will be called from the gate of charity; and whoever was amongst those who used to observe fasts, will be called from the gate of Ar-Rayyan." Abu Bakr said: "Let my parents be sacrificed for you, O Allah's Apostle! No distress or need will befall him who will be called from those gates. Will there be any one who will

be called from all these gates?" The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" replied: "Yes, and I hope you will be one of them." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Asim Ibn Damrah from Ali "Allah be pleased with him" that he made a mention of the fire (of Hell), and aggravated its matter but I do not remember what he said. Then he said: "And those who feared their Lord will be led to the Garden in crowds: until behold, they arrive at one of its gates, they would find a tree with two springs flowing from underneath its base. They would go to one of them, as they would be commanded, and drink thereof, thereupon it would remove the harm and trouble they have in their bellies. Then, they would go to the other and get purified from it, thereupon the beaming brightness of bliss would be visible on their bodies, after which their complexion would never change, nor would their heads ever get unkempt as if they oiled them with the best oil.

Then, they would arrive at Paradise, and its keepers would greet them with peace saying: "Peace be upon you! well have you done! enter you here, to dwell therein." Then, they would be received by the youth, going round them just as the youth of this world go round their masters with milk after return from a long absence, saying to each of them: "Receive the glad tidings of the honor and dignity prepared for you by Allah Almighty."

Then one of those youth would whisper into the ear of one of his (the newcomer's) wives (from the houris): "So and so has come." He would mention him by his name he used to be called by in the world. She would ask him: "Have you really seen him with your eyes?" He would answer in the affirmative. She would rejoice so much that she would stand up and run towards the gate of her pavilion. Once he arrives at his house, he would look at the base of its structure made of rocks of pearl different in kind and colour. When he raises his head and looks at its ceiling, behold! It would be as shining as lightning. Had Allah Almighty not doomed it to him, his sight would have been taken away due to its severe glitter.

Then, he would turn his face and behold! He would find his wives from among the houris on thrones (of dignity), raised on high, Goblets placed (ready), And Cushions set in rows, And rich carpets (all) spread out. Then, he would recline on the cushion and say: "Praise be to Allah, Who has truly fulfilled His promise to us, and has given us (this) land in heritage: we can dwell in the Garden as we will: how excellent a reward for those who work (righteousness)!" (Az-Zumar 74)

﴿ وَقَالُوا۟ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُۥ وَأَوْرَثَنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَآءُ ۖ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَـٰمِلِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴾

Then, a caller would make a public announcement: "You would live forever after which you would never die, abide forever after which you would never leave, and remain healthy after which you would never fall ill."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I would come to the gate of Paradise on the Day of Judgement, and ask that it be opened, and the keeper would ask: "Who are you?" I would say: "Muhammad."

He then would say: "I have been commanded not to open it to anyone before you."" (Muslim on the authority of Anas).

As well as there is disparity between the people in this world in the acts of worship and obedience, they would be different in the hereafter in ranks and degrees of loftiness. If you seek the highest degree, strive your utmost not to let anyone precede you. Allah Almighty indeed commanded you to take part in that race and competition saying: "Race towards forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden (of Bliss), the width whereof is as the width of heaven and earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers." (Al-Hadid 21)

﴿ سَابِقُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرۡضُهَا كَعَرۡضِ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ أُعِدَّتۡ

لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦۚ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾

And: "and for this let those aspire, who have aspirations." (Al-Mutaffiffin 26)

Wonder at you that if anyone in this world excels you in property or position, you would be filled with rage out of envy of him: Then, why should you not have the same interest and care concerning the hereafter, given that the place wherein you abide forever would not be free from others higher than you in rank and standing?

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The inmates of Paradise would see the inmates of the apartments over them just as you see the shining planets which remain in the eastern and the western horizon because of the superiority some would have over others." They said: "O Messenger of Allah, these would be the abodes of Prophets which none besides them would attain." He "peace be upon him" said: "By Him, in Whose hand is my life, those who believe in Allah and acknowledge the Truth, would attain them." (Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily, the men of the highest degrees (in the Garden) will be seen by such as below them in the same way as a shining star in one of the horizons of the sky is seen (by the inhabitants of the earth); and indeed, Abu Bakr and Umar belong to those (of the highest degrees); and they are more fitting for that!" (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah).

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Should I not tell you about the mansions of Paradise?" I said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah "peace be upon you": let our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you." He "peace be upon him" said: "In Paradise, there are mansions of all kinds of diamonds, (so much pure and transparent that) whose inside is seen from outside, and outside from inside. They have of pleasures and delights that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no human mind has ever thought of." I asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Whose would be those mansions?" he "peace be upon him" said: "They would be for such as spreads peace, serves others with food, fasts perpetually, and prays at night while people are asleep." He said: we said: "O Messenger of Allah! Who could endure

that?" He "peace be upon him" said: "My Ummah could endure that. Let me tell you about that: Whoever meets his brother and greets him with peace or returns his greeting to him has indeed spread peace; and whoever feeds his family and dependents until he satisfies them from food has indeed served others with food; and whoever fasts the month of Ramadan along with three fasts monthly has indeed fasted perpetually; and whoever offers Isha' and Fajr in congregation has prayed at night while people are asleep." (Abu Na'im).

Account Of Walls, Floors, Trees And Rivers Of Paradise

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The wall of Paradise is made from bricks, one of gold and one of silver, its dust of saffron, and its mud of musk." (At-Tirmidhi).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about the earth of Paradise thereupon he said: "It is of good white pure musk." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Sa'id).

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever is pleased that Allah Almighty should provide him with wine in the hereafter, let him leave it in this world; and whoever is pleased that Allah Almighty should dress him in silk in the hereafter, let him leave it in this world." (At-Tabarani and An-Nasa'i).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The rivers of Paradise would gush forth from underneath hills or mountains of musk." (Al-Aqili on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "If the least ornament given to anyone from among the inhabitants of Paradise is equaled with all ornaments of this world, then, the ornament given by Allah Almighty in the hereafter would be better than all ornaments on earth." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Hurairah).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily, in Paradise, there is a tree (so much huge) that the rider would proceed as long as one hundred years in its shade without being able to come to its end. If you so like, recite (in confirmation of that), the statement of Allah: "In shade long-extended." (Al-Waqi'ah) (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Umamah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The companions of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to say: "Allah Almighty benefits us with the Bedouins and their questions (about religious matters)." Then, a Bedouin came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Allah Almighty mentioned a harmful tree in the Qur'an, and I have never thought that Paradise has a tree that harms its owner." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" asked him: "What is that?" He said: "The lote-tree, for it has thorns." On that he "peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, Allah Almighty says: "(They will be) among Lote-trees without thorns." (Al-Waqi'ah 28)

﴿ فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

Its thorns would be removed by Allah and each one would be replaced by a big fruit, which would break open to seventy-two kinds of food, different from each other (in form and colour)." (Ibn Al-Mubarak).

Account Of The Clothes, Thrones And Cushions Of The Inhabitants Of Paradise

Allah Almighty said: "For them will be Gardens of Eternity; beneath them rivers will flow; they will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade; they will recline therein on raised thrones. How good the recompense! How beautiful a couch to recline on!" (Al-Kahf 31)

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِّن سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ ۚ نِعْمَ ٱلثَّوَابُ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

There are a lot of Qur'anic Holy Verses about that. But the details are mentioned more in the Prophetic narrations.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Whoever enters Paradise would be blessed forever, after which he would never suffer: Neither his dress would ever be worn out, nor would his youth ever get exhausted. In Paradise, there would be (of pleasures and delights) that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no human mind has ever thought of." (Muslim).

It is further narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr "Allah be pleased with him" that a man said to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! Tell us about the clothing of the inhabitants of Paradise: Would it be something created or woven (from fabric)?" He "peace be upon him" kept silent for a short while during which some of the people present there laughed. On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Why are you laughing? Do you laugh from somebody who asked about an item of knowledge of which he was ignorant?" then the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Nay! The fruits of Paradise would split open for it to come out twice." (An-Nasa'i).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The first group (of people) who will enter Paradise will be (glittering) like the moon when it is full. They will not spit nor blow their noses nor relieve nature. Their utensils will be of gold and their combs of gold and silver; in their censers the aloe wood will be used, and their sweat will smell like musk. Everyone of them will have two wives; the marrow of the bones of the wives' legs will be seen through the flesh out of excessive beauty. They (the people of Paradise) will neither have differences nor hatred amongst themselves; their hearts will be as if one heart and they will be glorifying Allah in the morning and in the evening." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said, in comment on the statement of Allah Almighty: "as to those who believe and work righteousness verily we shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a single righteous deed " (Al-Kahf 30)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا ﴾

"They will have crowns decked with pearl, the least of which will shine the whole space between the East and the West." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The pavilion in Paradise will be of hollow pearl, as high in the sky as sixty miles, in each one of whose corner there will be a wife for the faithful believer unseen by others." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari "Allah be pleased with him").

According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with them": "The pavilion (in Paradise) will be of hollow pearl, of a square area of Farsakh in Farsakh, having four thousand gateposts of gold."

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said in comment on the following statement of Allah Almighty: "And on Thrones (of Dignity), raised high" (Al-Waqi'ah 34)

﴿ وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ ﴾

"The distance between each pair of thrones is like the distance between the heaven and the earth." (At-Tirmidhi).

Account Of The Food Of The Inhabitants Of Paradise

The food of the inhabitants of Paradise is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, like fruits, flesh of fat birds, milk, honey, quails, manna, etc. in confirmation of that, Allah Almighty said: "But if ye cannot and of surety ye cannot then fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones which is prepared for those who reject faith ." (Al-Baqarah 24)

﴿ فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُواْ وَلَن تَفْعَلُواْ فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِي وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

As for the drink of Paradise, it is mentioned many times in the Holy Qur'an.

It is narrated on the authority of Thawban, the freed slave of The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" narrated: I was standing beside the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" when a Jewish rabbi came and said: "Peace be upon you O Muhammad." I pushed him so violently that I was about to knock him down. He asked me: "Why did you push me?" I said to him: "Wouldn't you call (The Prophet): O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "I call him with the name his family named him." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "My name is Muhammad, which is the name my family named me with." The Jew said: "I came to ask you (about something) ." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If I talked to you (with what you wanted) would it benefit you?" He said: "Let me (first) hear with my ear (so as to decide whether it

would benefit me)." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" scraped a stick he had (in the land) and said: "Ask about whatever you liked." The Jew asked: "Where would the people be on the day when the earth would be changed with another earth and so would be the heavens?" He (The Prophet) said: "They would be in the darkness, before the bridge." He asked: "Who of the people would cross first?" He (The Prophet) said: "The poor people of the Emigrants." The Jew asked: "What would they be gifted (to eat) just after they enter into Paradise?" He (The Prophet) replied: "The extra lope of a fish's liver." He asked: "Then, what would their food (or lunch) be following that?" He said: "An ox of Paradise, which used to eat from its quarters, would be slaughtered for them." He (the Jew) asked: "What would their drink on it be?" He (The Prophet) said: "They would drink from a well in it (Paradise) called Salsabil." He (the Jew) commented: "You have told the truth." (Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Zaid Ibn Arqam "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: A Jew came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Abu Al-Qasim! Do you not pretend that the inhabitants of Paradise will eat and drink?" He had previously said to his companions: "If he (the Prophet) answered in the affirmative, I would argue with him." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Yes, by Him in Whose Hand is my soul, anyone of them would be given the power of one hundred men in eating, drinking and sexual intercourse." The Jew said: "Then, who eats and drinks necessarily needs to relieve himself." On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Their need would be fulfilled in the form of sweat like musk flowing from their skin and behold! Their bellies would then become lean (empty from food and drink)." (An-Nasa'i).

It is reported on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Once you look at a bird in Paradise and have desire for it, it would fall down as roasted in front of you." (Al-Bazzar).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily, the birds of Paradise are like the Bukht (camels), eating from the trees of Paradise." Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" said: "O Messenger of Allah! How blessed are those!" On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "More blessed is the one who would eat thereof (he said it thrice); and I hope you would eat thereof." (Ahmad).

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with them" that he said in comment on the statement of Allah Almighty: "To them will be passed round, dishes and goblets of gold: there will be there all that the souls could desire, all that the eyes could delight in: and you shall abide therein (for aye)." (Az-Zukhruf 71)

﴿ يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ
وَتَلَذُّ ٱلْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنتُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾

"They would be served with seventy goblets of gold, each having a kind of

food that is not in the others."

It is further reported on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" that he said in comment on the statement of Allah Almighty: "With it will be (given) a mixture of Tasnim" (Al-Mutaffiffin 27)

﴿ وَمِزَاجُهُۥ مِن تَسۡنِيمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

"It will be mixed for the companions of the right hand while the nearest to Allah would drink thereof as pure. Were a man from the inhabitants of this world to dip his hand therein and then take it out, the pleasant smell would overwhelm all living beings on earth.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN
ACCOUNT OF HOURIS OF BIG LUSTROUS EYES

It should be known to you that the Qur'an made a mention of the houris (heavenly beautiful women of big lustrous eyes) many times, and the Prophetic narrations talked about them in more detail.

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "A single endeavor (of fighting) in Allah's Cause in the afternoon or in the forenoon is better than all the world and whatever is in it. A place in Paradise as small as the bow or lash of one of you is better than all the world and whatever is in it. And if a houri from Paradise appeared to the people of the earth, she would fill the space between Heaven and the Earth with light and pleasant scent and her head cover is better than the world and whatever is in it." (Al-Bukhari).

It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said in comment on the statement of Allah Almighty: "In them will be (Maidens), chaste, restraining their glances, whom no man or Jinn before them has touched… Like unto rubies and coral" (Ar-Rahman 58)

﴿ كَأَنَّهُنَّ ٱلۡيَاقُوتُ وَٱلۡمَرۡجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾ ﴾

"If you look at her cheek in her tent you would find it purer than a mirror; and the smallest pearl on her is (as shining as) to illuminate what is between the East and the West. She will have seventy dresses, so transparent that the marrow of her leg would be seen from behind them." (Abu Ya'li and Ahmad).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the night I was made to set out on a night journey to the heaven, I entered a place in Paradise called Baydakh, in which there were tents of pearl, green aquamarine and rubies. Women said: "Peace be upon you O Messenger of Allah." I asked: "O Gabriel! What is that call?" He said: "Those are the (houris) restrained (to their glances) in pavilions. They have sought the permission of their Lord to salute you, and He gave them permission." Then they said: "We are the ever-contented, who never become displeased; and we are the eternal ones, who never leave." Then, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited the statement of Allah: "Companions restrained (as to their glances), in (goodly) pavilions." (Ar-Rahman 72)

﴿ حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَٰتٌ فِى ٱلْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

It is narrated that a man said: "O Messenger of Allah! Should the inhabitants of Paradise have sexual intercourse (with women)?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "A man of them would be given on one day the power of seventy from among you." (At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The man from among the inhabitants of Paradise will marry five hundred houris, four thousand virgins, and eight thousand previously married women, and will embrace each of them as long as is equal to the whole of his lifetime in this world." (Abu Ash-Shaykh on the authority of Ibn Abu Awfa).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "In Paradise, there will be a market in which no transaction is practiced. But it will have only faces of men and women: if a man has a desire for the face of any woman, he will enter into it. It will have the gathering of the houris of big lustrous eyes, raising their voices, the like of which the creatures have never heard : "We are ever eternal who never leave. We are ever blissful who never suffer. We are ever contented who never become displeased. Blessed be he who will be for us and we for him." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Ali).

It is reported on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily, the houris of big lustrious eyes are singing in Paradise: 'We are the good beautiful houris kept for honored husbands.' (At-Tabarani).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Umamah Al-Bahili "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No man enters Paradise but that two houris of big lustrous eyes sit by his head and feet, singing to him with the best voice men and jinn have ever heard, not like the musical instruments of devil, but praising and exalting Allah Almighty." (At-Tabarani).

A Set Of Various Attributes Of The Inhabitants Of Paradise

It is narrated on the authority of Usamah Ibn Zaid that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said one day to his companions: "Let's us seek earnestly for the Garden! Verily, the Garden has no rival: it is, by the Lord of the Ka'bah, a shining light, a moving basil, a well-established palace, a flowing river, ripe fruits in abundance, a beautiful good looking wife, a lot of ornaments in a permanent station in affluence and brightness, in high wonderful faultless houses." They said: "We are seeking earnestly for it O Messenger of Allah." He said: "You should say (by way of restriction): "Allah Willing." Then, he made a mention of Jihad and exhorted them to do it. (Ibn Majah and Ibn Hibban).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The first group of people, who will enter Paradise, will be glittering like the full moon; and those who will follow them, will glitter like the most brilliant star in the sky. They will neither urinate, nor relieve nature, nor spit, nor have any nasal secretions. Their combs will be of gold, and their sweat will smell like musk. The aloe wood will be used in their

censers. Their wives will be so much beautiful with big and lustrous eyes. All of them will look alike and will resemble their father Adam (in stature), as tall as sixty cubits." (Ibn Majah).

It is narrated that a man came to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Would there be horses in Paradise? Indeed I like them very much." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "If you so like, you will have a ruby-made horse to fly with you wherever you want in Paradise." Another man asked him: "Would there be camels in Paradise?" He said: "O servant of Allah! If you are admitted to Paradise, you would have therein what your soul desires and pleases your eye." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Buraidah).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily, a man from the inhabitants of Paradise will beget the child just as he likes, with his pregnancy, birth, weaning and growth being only in one hour." (Ibn Majah and At-Tirmidhi).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The inhabitants of Paradise would be hairless, beardless, soft and white-complexioned, of thirty-three years of age, in the form of Adam, sixty cubits high and seven cubits broad." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Mu'adh).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "The one who will have the least position in Paradise will have eighty thousand servants and seventy-two wives, to whom a dome of pearl, aquamarine and rubies will be set up, as wide as is the distance from Al-Jabiyah to San'a. they will have crowns over their heads, the smallest pearl of which will (be as shining as to) illuminate what is between the East and the West." (At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id "Allah be pleased with him").

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: Allah Almighty says: "I have prepared for My servants (in Paradise) that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no human mind has ever thought of." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Al-Hassan Al-Basri mentioned the attributes of Paradise in brief saying: "Its pomegranates are as huge as buckets; and its rivers are incorruptible; rivers of milk of which the taste never changes; rivers of wine, which neither befogs the minds, nor troubles thinking: But a joy to those who drink; and rivers of honey pure and clear. In it there are for them all kinds of fruits; and Grace from their Lord. in it, there is neither fatigue, nor trouble, nor pain at all. It has what no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no human mind has ever thought of. Its inhabitants will be blissful kings of thirty-three years of age, sixty cubits long, and seven cubits broad, hairless, beardless, white-complexioned. They will be safe from punishment, reassured and free from anxiety. Its rivers flow over rocks of rubies and aquamarines. Its trees, palms and vine are of pearls, and its fruits are unknown to anyone other than Allah Almighty. Its pleasant smell is detectable from as far as a five hundred-year journey. They will have horses and camels therein, whose saddles and bridals are of rubies.

They will visit each other therein. Their wives will be from the houris of big lustrous eyes, as pure as well-guarded pearls. Any woman of them would put on seventy dresses over her body, and even, out of her beauty, the marrow of her legs would be visible from behind all of them. In it, Allah Almighty will purify characters from evil and bodies from death. In it they will neither spit, nor expectorate, nor urinate, nor defecate: But it will be just sweat as pleasant as musk. Their sustenance will be brought to them every morning and evening. The last of people to enter Paradise will be made to stretch his sight to see his kingdom across one hundred years of palaces, houses and tents of gold, silver and pearl, and it will be too spacious for him to enable him to see his kingdom from one end to the other. It will be passed round them with seventy thousand goblets of gold every morning and evening, each having a definite kind of food that is not in the others. In Paradise, there is a ruby, having seventy thousand houses, each of which has seventy thousand dwellings, in which there is neither flaw nor a hole."

According to Mujahid: "The one who will have the least position from among the inhabitants of Paradise will walk one thousand years along his kingdom, seeing it from one end to the other. But the one who will have the highest rank is he who will look at the Countenance of his Lord every morning and evening."

According to Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab: "There is none from among the inhabitants of Paradise but that he will have three bracelets: One of gold, another of silver and a third of pearl."

According to Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him": "In Paradise, there is a houri called Al-Ayna' (lady of large beautiful attractive eye): Whenever she walks, seventy thousand chambermaids walk on her right and left. She will be saying: "Where are those who used to enjoin right and forbid evil?"

According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: "It is difficult to leave this world; and more difficult is to miss Paradise. But even, to leave this world is the dower of Paradise." He said on another occasion: "Humiliation lies in the pursuit of this world, whereas honor lies in pursuit of the hereafter. Wonder at him who prefers humiliation in pursuit of what is perishable to the honor in pursuit of what is enduring."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ACCOUNT OF VISION AND LOOKING AT THE COUNTENANCE OF ALLAH

Allah Almighty said: "To those who do right is a goodly (reward) yea, more (than in measure)!" (Yunus 26)

﴿ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ﴾

This more is the vision and looking at the Countenance of Allah Almighty. It is the greatest pleasure, which causes the beholder to forget all delights of Paradise. There are witnesses to it from the Book and sunnah, unlike what some religious innovators might falsely think.

It is narrated on the authority of Jarir Ibn Abdullah Al-Bajali "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: We were with The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and he looked at the moon, and it was full, and then

said: “Certainly you will see your Lord as you see this moon and you will have no trouble in seeing Him. So if you can avoid missing (through sleep or business, etc.) a prayer before the sunrise (Fajr) and a prayer before sunset (Asr), you must do so.” He then recited Allah's Statement: “And celebrate the praises Of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting." (Qaf 39)

﴿ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ ٱلشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ ٱلْغُرُوبِ ﴾

(Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Suhaib "Allah be pleased with him" that The Prophet “Allah’s blessing and peace be upon him” said: “When the people of Paradise enter into Paradise, Allah would address them saying: “Do you want me to give you anything more?” They would reply: “Did you (O Lord) not make heavy our balances (of good deeds)? Did You not make our faces bright? Did you not admit us in Paradise and save us from the (Hell) fire?” Then, he (Allah) would remove the veil (of light), and they would look at the Countenance of Allah Almighty. In this way, they would not be given anything dearer to them than their seeing their Lord the Exalted.” (Muslim).

Indeed, it is with that pleasure that all other delights of Paradise are forgotten and regarded with slightness. The happiness of the people of Paradise in that vision is infinite. The pleasure of meeting Allah Almighty is incomparable to any pleasure else. The servant should not be concerned with anything from Paradise other than the meeting of Allah Almighty, for the remaining pleasures of Paradise are shared between him and the animals.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN
EXTENSIVE MERCY OF ALLAH ALMIGHTY

Let’s conclude our book with a brief talk about the extensive mercy of Allah Almighty, by way of optimism, since the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to love the good omen and the good pleasant word. We have but to imitate the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in all that he loved.

Allah Almighty said: “Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgives anything else, to whom He pleases; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed.” (An-Nisa’ 48)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱفْتَرَىٰٓ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

And: “Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Az-Zumar 53)

﴿ ۞ قُلْ يَـٰعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا۟ مِن رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴾

And: “If anyone does evil or wrongs his own soul but afterwards seeks Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (An-Nisa’ 110)

﴿ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُۥ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ يَجِدِ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴾

First of all, we seek forgiveness of Allah for any foot slip or pen transgression in this book; we seek His forgiveness for our statements that might contradict our deeds; we seek His forgiveness for the knowledge we have shown in the religion of Allah Almighty, and then indulged in or fallen short of it; and we seek His forgiveness for every deed or act thereby we intended His Countenance, and then it was mixed with anything else; and we seek His forgiveness for every promise we made and failed to fulfill; and we seek His forgiveness for every favor He conferred upon us and we utilized in disobedience of Him; and we seek His forgiveness for every kind of shortage deficiency or indulgence; and we seek His forgiveness for every idea that invited us to ostentation that seemed in what we said or wrote to people.

Then, we hope, after that seeking for forgiveness, for everyone who has read or heard of this book of ours, to be granted forgiveness, mercy and excuse of all sins, be they apparent or hidden: Indeed, Allah's generosity is encompassing, and His mercy all-embracing.

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The mercy of Allah Almighty consists of one hundred parts, and He sent only one on earth and distributed among men, jinn, animals and insects, therewith they show mercy towards each other, and have affection for each other; and kept with Him ninety-nine parts of mercy to bestow upon His servants on the Day of Judgement." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah and Salman).

It is further reported that when it is the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty would bring out a book from underneath the Throne (of Majesty), having the following phrase: "My mercy has preceded (and overpowered) My anger." It is with this phrase that as much as is the number of the inhabitants of Paradise would be taken out of the fire (of Hell)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty would rise with His Glory to us and say cheerfully: "Receive the glad tidings O Muslims! There is none of you but that I have put in his place in fire a Jew or a Christian." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty would accept the intercession of Adam for one hundred and ten thousand thousand from among all his offspring." (At-Tabarani on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Indeed, on the Day of Judgement, Allah would say to the faithful believers: "Have you liked to meet Me?" they would answer in the affirmative, and He would ask them: "Why?" They would say: "We have hoped for Your pardon and forgiveness." On that He would say: "Then, I have assured My forgiveness to you." (Ahmad and At-Tabarani on the authority of Mu'adh).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: Allah Almighty says on the Day of Judgement: "Take out of fire such as remembered me even on a single day or feared me even on a single standing."

(At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "When the denizens of fire gather in the fire, along with such as Allah wills from among the people of Qiblah (i.e. Muslims), the disbelievers would say to the Muslims: "Have you not been Muslims?" They would answer in the affirmative. They would say to them: "Then, your faith in Islam has availed you not as you now are with us in the fire of Hell." They would say: "Indeed, we committed sins for which we received punishment." Allah Almighty would hear their speech, and command to take out the Muslims from the fire, and when they are taken out, the disbelievers would say: "Would that we were Muslims to be taken out just as they have been taken out!" Then, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited: "Again and again will those who disbelieve, wish that they had bowed (to Allah's Will) in Islam." (Al-Hijr 2)

﴿ رُّبَمَا يَوَدُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَوْ كَانُواْ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

(An-Nasa'i on the authority of Jabir "Allah be pleased with him").

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "No doubt, Allah is more merciful towards His believing servant than a mother towards her newborn child." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him").

According to Jabir Ibn Abdullah "Allah be pleased with them": "Whoever comes on the Day of Judgement with his good deeds more than his misdeeds, would enter Paradise without reckoning; and whoever has his good deeds equal to his misdeeds, would be reckoned with easy reckoning and then enter Paradise; and the intercession of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" would be due to such as destroys himself and overburdens his back (with sins and misdeeds)."

It is reported that Allah Almighty said to Moses "peace be upon him": "O Moses! Qarun sought relief of you and you did not relieve him. By My Honor and Glory! Had he sought relief of Me, I would have relieved him."

According to Sa'd Ibn Bilal: "On the Day of Judgement, it would be commanded that two men be taken out of the fire, and Allah Almighty would say: "This is because of the (unrighteous deeds) which your hands sent on before you: for Allah never harms those who serve Him." (Al Imran 182)

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿١٨٢﴾ ﴾

Then, He would command that they be brought back to the fire. One of them would rush in his chains until he enters it, and the other would slow down. Allah would command that they be brought to Him and ask them about their deed. The one who would rush towards the fire would say: "I was warned of the evil consequence of disobedience, and I was not to expose myself to Your wrath once again." The other who would slow down would say: "My good assumption of You gave me the impression that You would not bring me back to it once again after You have taken me out of it." Then, He Almighty would command that they enter Paradise."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On

the Day of Judgement, a caller would call publicly from underneath the Throne of Majesty: "O Ummah of Muhammad! I have forgiven for you what I have on you, and there remains on you only the rights you have on each other: then, excuse each other for them and enter Paradise by virtue of My mercy."

It is narrated on the authority of As-Sunabihi that he went to visit Ubadah Ibn As-Samit who was at his last breaths. (the narrator said): I burst into tears. He said to me: "(Be quiet and) give me some time (so that I may tell you something). Why do you weep? By Allah, if I am made to be a witness, I would surely testify for you (that you are a faithful believer). If I am asked to intercede, I would surely intercede for you. Moreover, if I have the power, I would surely do good to you. By Allah, I have never heard anything from The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" which could have been of benefit to you, but that I reported to you except this narration, which I'm going to narrate to you now, since I am about to die. I heard The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" saying: "He who testifies that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is The Messenger of Allah, Allah would forbid the (Hell) fire from him." (Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, a man from my Ummah will be called loudly in the presence of all the creatures, and ninety-nine scrolls (of his evil deeds) will be spread for him, each as long as the sight could reach, and Allah Almighty will say to him: "Do you deny anything of those (misdeeds the scrolls contain)?" he will say: "No O my Lord!" he (Allah) will say: "Have My keeping scribes wronged you?" He will answer in the negative. he (Allah) will say: "Do you have any good deed (to suffice you) against that?" He will feel afraid and then say: "No." He (Allah) will say: "Nay! You have a good deed with Us; and today, you should receive no injustice." Then, a card having (the testimony that) "I bear witness that there is No god (to be worshipped) but Allah, and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger and servant" will be brought out for him, thereupon he will say: "O my Lord! What could this card do with those long scrolls?" he (Allah) will say: "You will not be wronged (even in the least)." The scrolls will be placed in one pan, and the card in the other, and then the scrolls will fly away, and the card will overweigh." (Ibn Majah).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that eh said: During the lifetime of The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" some people said: "O Allah's Apostle! Shall we see our Lord on the Day of Judgement?" The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Yes. Do you have any difficulty in seeing the sun at midday when it is bright and there is no cloud in the sky? Do you have any difficulty in seeing the moon at a full moon night when it is bright and there is no cloud in the sky?" They replied: "No." The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "(Then) you will have no difficulty in seeing Allah on the Day of Judgement as you have no difficulty in seeing both of them. On the Day of Judgement, a call-maker will announce: "Let every nation follow that which they used to worship people will come out (of the River of Life) like pearls, wearing necklaces. Then they will enter into Paradise whereupon the people of Paradise will say: "Those are the

people set free by The Most Gracious. He has admitted them into Paradise though they did no good deeds nor did they sent forth any good (for themselves)". Then it will be said to them: "All of what you have seen is For you, in addition to an amount equal to it as well." They will say: "O our Lord! You have given us what you have not given anyone of the worlds". Allah will reply: "There remains better than that with me to give you". They will ask: "O our Lord! Which thing is better than that?" He will say: "My pleasure (with you), after which, I would never be angry with you." Every nation, which used to worship anything other than Allah such idles, will fall into the (Hell) fire. There will remain none but those who used to worship Allah, whether they were obedient (Good) or disobedient (evil) and the remaining party of the people of the Scripture. Then the Jews will be called upon and it will be said to them: "Whom did you use to worship?" They will say: "We used to worship Ezra, the son of Allah." It will be said to them: "You are liars, for Allah has never taken anyone as a wife or a son. What do you want now?" They will say: "O our Lord! We are thirsty, and we want to drink." They will be directed and addressed thus: "Wouldn't you drink?" whereupon they will be mustered into The Hell, which will be like a mirage, with each part destroying the other. Then, they will fall into the (Hell) fire. Afterwards the Christians will be called upon and it will be said to them: "Whom did you use to worship?" They will say: "We used to worship Jesus, the son of Allah." It will be said to them: "You are liars, for Allah has never taken anyone as a wife or a son." Then it will be said to them: "What do you want?" They will say: "O Lord! We are thirsty, and We want to drink." They will be directed and addressed: "Wouldn't you drink?" They will be gathered into the Hell, which will be like a mirage, with each part destroying the other. Then they will fall into The (Hell) fire. Then, when there remain (in the gathering) none but those who used to worship Allah whether they were obedient or disobedient, The Lord of all the worlds "Exalted be He" will come to them in a shape, different from that they saw (at first), and he will say to them: "What are you waiting for? Every nation has followed what they used to worship." They will reply: "We left the people in the world when we were in great need of them and we did not take them as friends. Now we are waiting for our Lord Whom we used to worship." He will say: "I am your Lord." They will say: "We seek refuge from you! We never associate anything with Allah." (They will say so twice or thrice), to the extent that some of them will be about to revert. Then it will be said to them: "Do you know any sign by which you can recognize Him?" They will say: "Yes (It is The Shin) ." Allah will then uncover the Shin whereupon every believer, who used to prostrate to Allah out of faith will be allowed to prostrate before Him, but there is no one, who used to prostrate before Him just for showing off and getting good reputation but that Allah will make his back as a vertebra. The more he will try to prostrate the more (his back will be as rigid as a piece of wood so that) he will fall on his back. When they will raise up their heads (after the prostration), There, he will change into the shape they saw at the first time. He will say (to them): "I'm your Lord." They will confirm: "Indeed, You are our Lord" Then the bridge will be laid across Hell; and the intercession will be permitted, and they will say: "O Allah, save us! O Allah, save us!" The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked: "O Allah's Apostle! What is

the bridge?" He said: "It is a slippery (bridge) on which there are clamps and (Hooks like) thorny seeds, which are wide at one side and narrow at the other, having thorns with bent ends. Such thorny seeds are found in Najd and are called Sa'dan. Some of the believers will cross the bridge as quick as the wink of an eye, some others as quick as lightning, (others as fast as) a strong wind, (others as quick as) birds, fast horses or she-camels. Moreover, some will be safe without any harm; some will be safe after receiving some scratches, and some will fall down into Hell (Fire). By Him, in Whose hand my soul is! There will be no one of you (Muslims) more pressing in claiming a right that has been clearly proved to be yours than the believers in intercession with Allah for their (Muslim) brothers on The Day of Judgement, when they see themselves safe. They will say: "O Allah! (Save) our brothers (for they) used to pray with us, fast with us and also perform pilgrimage with us." Allah will say (to them): "Go and take out whomever you recognize." The fire will be forbidden to burn their (the sinners') faces. They will go and take out from the fire a lot of creatures, some of whom, the fire will burn up to the half of their legs, some up to their knees. Then, they will say (to Allah): "O our Lord! There remains no one of those whom You ordered to take out." Allah will say: "Go back and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find goodness equal to the weight of a Dinar." They will go and take out a lot of creatures. They will say (to Allah): "O our Lord! We no longer recognize anyone remaining of those whom You ordered us to take out (of the fire) ." Allah will say: "Go and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find goodness equal to the weight of half a Dinar." They will take out a lot of creatures. Then they will say (to Allah): "O our Lord! We no longer find anyone remaining of those whom You ordered us to take out." Allah will say: "Go and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find goodness equal to the weight of an atom (or a smallest ant) ." They will take out a lot of creatures. Then, they will say (to Allah): "O our Lord! We no longer find any (creature having) goodness." Abu Sa'id "Allah be pleased with him" said: If you do not believe me then you can recite: "Allah is never unjust in the least degree: if there is any good (done), he doubles it, and gives from his own presence a great reward." (An-Nisa' 40)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "Allah Almighty will say: "The Prophets, the Angels, and the believers interceded, and there remains only (the Intercession of) The Most Merciful." He will hold a handful of the Fire from which He will take out some people who did never do good (in this world), whose bodies have been burnt. They will be thrown into a river at the entrance of Paradise, called the water of life. They will grow on its banks, as a seed carried by the torrent grows. Perhaps you observed how it grows beside a rock or beside a tree, and how the side facing the sun is usually green, while the side facing the shade is white." The companions of The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "O Messenger of Allah! It seemed as if you used to shepherd the cattle and sheep in the desert." (Then The Prophet resumed): "Those people will come out (of the River of Life) like pearls, wearing necklaces. Then they will enter into Paradise whereupon the people of Paradise

will say: "Those are the people set free by The Most Gracious. He has admitted them into Paradise though they did no good deeds nor did they sent forth any good (for themselves) ." Then it will be said to them: "All of what you have seen is For you, in addition to an amount equal to it as well." They will say: "O our Lord! You have given us what you have not given anyone of the worlds." Allah will reply: "There remains better than that with me to give you." They will ask: "O our Lord! Which thing is better than that?" he will say: "My pleasure (with you), after which, I would never be angry with you." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

It is further narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas: "The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" came out to us and said: "The people were displayed in front of me and I saw one prophet passing by with a large group of his followers, and another prophet passing by with only a small group of people, and another prophet passing by with only ten (persons), and another prophet passing by with only five (persons), and another prophet passed by alone. And then I looked and saw a large multitude of people, so I asked Gabriel, "Are these people my followers?" He said: "No, but look towards the horizon." I looked and saw a very large multitude of people. Gabriel said. Those are your followers, and those are seventy thousand (persons) in front of them who will neither have any reckoning of their accounts nor will receive any punishment." I asked: "Why?" He said: "For they used not to treat themselves with branding (cauterization) nor with Ruqyah (get oneself treated by the recitation of some Verses of the Qur'an) and not to see evil omen in things, and they used to put their trust (only) in their Lord." On hearing that, Ukashah Ibn Mihsan got up and said (to The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"), "Invoke Allah to make me one of them." The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "O Allah, make him one of them." Then another man got up and said (to The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"), "Invoke Allah to make me one of them." The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Ukashah has preceded you." (Al-Bukhari).

It is narrated on the authority of Amr Ibn Hazm Al-Ansari that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" withdrew from us for three days, during which he came out only for an obligatory written prayer and then he would return home. When it was the fourth day he came out to us and we said: "O Messenger of Allah! You have withdrawn from us to the extent that we thought something serious has happened." He "peace be upon him" said: "Nothing but good has happened. Allah Almighty promised me to admit to Paradise seventy thousand of my Ummah without reckoning, and during those three days (I was absent from you), I kept asking my Lord for more, and found my Lord Most Generous, Most Glorious, Most Beneficent. He granted to me with each one of the seventy thousand another seventy thousand (to enter Paradise without reckoning). I said: "O my Lord! would my Ummah reach that number?" He said: "I would complete it from the Bedouins." (Al-Baihaqi, Ahmad and Abu Ya'li).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Gabriel came to me to the side of this Harrah (of Medina) as a messenger from my Lord and gave me the news (or good tidings) that if any of my followers dies

worshipping none (in any way) along with Allah, he will enter Paradise." I asked: "Even if he committed adultery and theft?" He replied: "Even if he committed adultery and theft." I asked again: "Even if he committed adultery and theft?" He replied: "Even if he committed adultery and theft." I asked (for the third time): "Even if he committed adultery and theft?" He replied: "Even if he committed adultery and theft." (Al-Bukhari).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited: "But for such as fear the time when they will stand before (the Judgment Seat of) their Lord, there will be two Gardens." (Ar-Rahman 46)

﴿ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ ﴾

I asked: "Even if he committed adultery and theft O Messenger of Allah?" He recited: "But for such as fear the time when they will stand before (the Judgment Seat of) their Lord, there will be two Gardens." I asked (for the third time): "Even if he committed adultery and theft O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Yes, against the will of Abu Ad-Darda'." (Ahmad).

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said: "When it is the day of Judgement, everyone of the believers will be given one from amongst the non-Muslims , and it will be said to him: "That is your ransom from the fire (of Hell)." (Muslim on the authority of Abu Musa).

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Burdah that he related to Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz from his father Abu Musa "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No Muslim person dies but that Allah admits to the fire in his place a Jew or a Christian." Umar Ibn Abd-Al-Aziz beseeched him to take oath by Allah other than Whom there is no god thrice to confirm to him whether his father related that to him from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and he took oath to that. (Muslim).

It is narrated on the authority of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased with him" that some prisoners were brought to The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" amongst whom there was a woman, who was searching (for someone) and when she found a child amongst the prisoners, she took hold of it, pressed it against her chest and provided it suck. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Do you think this woman would ever afford to throw her child in the Fire?" We said: "By Allah, so far as it lies in her power, she would never throw the child in Fire." The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Allah is more merciful towards His servants than this woman towards her child." (Muslim).

Those Hadiths give us the glad tidings of the extensive mercy of Allah Almighty. So, we hope that Allah Almighty should not deal with us according to what we deserve, and rather endow us with what is fitting for Him, out of His great bounty, all-embracing generosity and extensive mercy.

CONTENTS